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ABSTRACT

A case study was done of the Boston University management and operation of the Chelsea (Massachusetts) school system including perceptions of key participants and outcomes of the first year of the partnership. Despite unanticipated levels of hostility between various groups and slow funding, which slowed some first year objectives, the project made progress in the following areas in the first year: (1) strengthening the administrative and physical capacity; (2) improving the academic climate; (3) implementing early childhood education programs; (4) establishment of a health care center; and (5) development of curriculum objectives. Problems encountered in the first year were either financial or involved problems of rapport between groups. Fund-raising got off to a slow start but ultimately fell only 27 percent below projections. Conflicts among groups initially centered around fears that the public's business would not be conducted in public or subject to the safeguards normally imposed on government bodies. Although that issue was resolved in large part, there continues to persist the problem of defining processes and relationships among the various interested parties. Included are nine exhibits and six appendices containing a list of persons interviewed for the report; thoughts on the project implementation; a tables of contents for "A Model for Excellence in Urban Education"; an action plan; and lists of cash gifts, pledges, and grants. (JB)

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IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CHELSEA SCHOOL PROJECT:

A CASE STUDY

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Introduction

Chelsea, Massachusetts is a microcosm of an urban community in transition. Located a bridge away from Boston, Chelsea has experienced profound socioeconomic and cultural changes in recent years, as highlighted in an article in Newsweek, September 17, 1990:

> Chelsea (population: 26,000) once boasted a quality school system that served generations of successful Italian, Irish, and Jewish communities. Horatio Alger graduated from Chelsea High some 140 years ago. But there are few modern-day Horatio Alger stories read or lived there today. Over the last 60 years, the population has shrunk by half, fleeing along with the city's once strong industrial base. What's left is a litany of underclass woes. Chelsea is the state's poorest community.

Although it is less than two square miles in size and has a student population of only 3,600, Chelsea manifests many of the same characteristics of larger urban school systems across the country: it is poor and ethnically diverse; student performance is low and dropout rates are high; and students' and parents' needs extend beyond the classroom because of inadequate health care and employment opportunities.

In addition, compared with many other urban areas, Chelsea lacks the economic resources, administrative staff, and political base necessary to support its schools. Chelsea's poor economic base has hampered the school district's ability to support a comprehensive educational program for a diverse student population. Furthermore, education does not appear to be the top priority of Chelsea's political leadership; for example:

- Chelsea allocates only 17 cents per tax dollar for education, the lowest amount of any local jurisdiction in the state.

- The board of aldermen contributes less than 20 percent of local revenues to the schools, substantially less than the 31 percent spent by other Massachusetts cities and the 54 percent average expended statewide.

- Although Chelsea is among the bottom five local jurisdictions in per capita spending for education, it ranks among the top five in per capita spending for police and fire protection.

- Chelsea is the only city or town in Massachusetts that had not taken advantage of the state's school building assistance program, in operation since 1947, which funds 90 percent of construction costs for districts implementing a minority balance plan.

Planning for Change

In 1987 the Chelsea School Committee (school board) requested that Boston University (BU) consider managing and operating the Chelsea school system. BU responded with a comprehensive study that outlined the strengths and weaknesses of the existing system and proposed a comprehensive ten-year plan for BU to manage the Chelsea public schools. This plan, set forth in A Model for Excellence in Urban Education, discussed factors outside the school that foster or exacerbate Chelsea's educational problems. These factors include health, nutrition, and the need for self-help and social skills as well as literacy and language skills among preschool children and their parents. The plan incorporated concepts of using family, schools, and lifelong learning to address the broader problems that many people believe to be an integral part of today's education problems. The plan also called for extensive facility improvements to increase the school system's ability to serve current needs and to provide this expanded vision.

The plan focused first on the preschool and primary levels, with the establishment of early learning centers and day care services for all children from kindergarten through grade 6. Improvements in the curriculum and educational approach were to continue up through the grades in an incremental fashion over a four-year time span. Eventually, the entire K-12 curriculum was to be redesigned, with particular attention to relating the substance of the curriculum to the students' lives and community. The curriculum was also to be standardized across the school system.

The plan included establishing programs that link school and home, providing intergenerational literacy and English-language programs for parents and their preschool children, and establishing special nutrition and health programs for pregnant women and their children until they reach the age of three.

Following a contentious approval process, the Chelsea School Committee and Boston University's trustees entered into a ten-year partnership beginning in June 1989. Under the provisions of the agreement, the members of the school committee would continue to be elected by the voters of Chelsea every two years but authority to govern and manage the school system would be assumed by BU.

The university thus acquired authority to hire the superintendent; to enter into collective bargaining agreements; set curriculum, instruction, and personnel policies; to formulate the annual budget and oversee expenditures; and to seek external funds. BU, in turn, was required to implement a comprehensive reform plan designed to improve the entire school district. These efforts were to be based on the action plan outlined in A Model for Excellence in Urban Education.

This landmark agreement is significant for two reasons.

1. It acknowledges Chelsea's broader socioeconomic needs by making "family schools" the cornerstone of the reform efforts -- an approach that focuses on educating students of all ages, from prekindergarteners to adults, and by proposing comprehensive, systemic change that includes the provision of health services and coordination of other social services.

2. This is the first time that a private university has assumed control of an entire school system. Accordingly, the experiences of Chelsea and Boston University could prove invaluable to school districts nationwide -- in determining both what works and what may not -- when implementing a comprehensive, top-down restructuring of a school system.

This study provides descriptive information about the process and the outcomes of the first year of the Chelsea-BU partnership. The information was collected through multiple site visits, time-lapsed interviews, and reviews of numerous documents. We have also collected extant baseline student data and designed a survey of the teachers[1] to establish the analytical groundwork for a longitudinal evaluation of both the implementation process and specific programs. Ultimately, our interest is in measuring the impact of the partnership on the lives of Chelsea's students as well as on the schools and community.

We have made an effort to capture the perceptions of the key participants about the process and the outcomes of the first year of the partnership, as well as their thoughts about any lessons they have learned with benefit of hindsight. To these perceptions, we have added our own, as professional and impartial evaluators, of what we heard, read, and saw.

Implementation of the Chelsea-BU Agreement: The First Year

Much of the first year of the Chelsea-BU project was spent developing a workable relationship between BU and various groups within the Chelsea community. A great deal of hostility and resistance to implementation existed that had not been anticipated when the ten-year plan was written. Furthermore, funds for the project were slow in coming, were frequently restricted to specific projects when they did come, and were insufficient to pursue all of the first-year goals of the plan, particularly high-cost components such as the individual learning plans.

Threatened teacher strikes, extensive negotiations, the immediate hiring of a new superintendent, fund-raising, and general efforts to calm the rancor and build a more cooperative, trusting environment, absorbed unexpected amounts of time and energy from BU staff members. As a result, some of the original first year objectives were not accomplished and progress toward some of the other objectives was slowed. Nonetheless, the Chelsea-BU project has made significant strides in achieving its goals and continues to do so.

Achievements

A broad range of activities were undertaken during the first year of the Chelsea-BU partnership, including some directed toward staff, parents, and the community at large, as well as those directed toward students. The activities also included planning and administrative projects in education, as well as projects in health and human services. Many of the activities that got under way in the first year of the agreement were carefully planned, while others developed quickly either because funds became available or because serious problems demanded immediate attention.

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[1] This survey was recently conducted; a report on the results should be completed by the early fall of 1991.

Many of the new programs and activities implemented in Chelsea during the 1989-90 school year can be attributed to BU's presence and role. The additional resources BU brought, both financial and professional, resulted in a number of initiatives that certainly would not have occurred if BU had not been on the scene. Furthermore, although it has been suggested with some justification that BU would have created less tension and anxiety if it had done more to recognize and build upon the good programs and resources already existing in the community, Chelsea teachers and administrators commented favorably on the availability of BU resources to support and supplement programs existing prior to the agreement.

The new superintendent, Diana Lam, also contributed to the changed atmosphere and the effective implementation of many activities in Chelsea in 1989-90. Superintendent Lam expanded the activities originally planned for the first year because she was unwilling to let the painful needs of current students be ignored while plans were made to prevent such needs in the future. When financial necessities forced eighth-grade students to be placed in the high school, she reorganized the high school to accommodate these younger students in a separate wing of the school and thus give them a sense of identity. When she realized that more than half the high school students failed two or more courses during the fall semester, she organized an intensive after school and weekend program for these students. She also instituted relatively inexpensive ideas for school improvement -- particularly improvements that build a sense of involvement, community, and communication among teachers and among parents -- that had simply not been thought of in the action plan. To BU's credit, the management team has supported her efforts, provided her with the information she needed and allowed her to carry out and even expand her ideas.

The Chelsea-BU project has achieved progress in administrative and physical capacity, academic climate, early childhood education, health care, and curriculum development. They also made important strides in increasing parent and community involvement in education.

Administrative and Physical Capacity

The Chelsea-BU project has strengthened Chelsea's administrative and physical capacity in several ways:

1. The BU management team hired an energetic and creative superintendent, Diana Lam, who has proved able to bridge the gap between BU and Chelsea. She has provided well structured goals and strategies that could serve as the basis for accountable measures of progress. In addition, she is working with BU to develop the skills of the Chelsea school personnel and to implement personnel performance measures.

2. The project has installed a computerized system to manage all student records and fiscal data. The project has developed a facilities plan that, if funded, will enable the schools to have the physical capacity needed to support the new reforms.

Academic Climate

Progress toward an improved academic climate has been attempted by extending teacher involvement beyond their own classrooms and into the school as a whole, improving teacher skills, restructuring the high school to provide schools within a school to serve diverse student needs, clustering the middle school to provide integrated educational services, providing adult mentors for students at the high school, and establishing a program of intensive afterschool and weekend teaching (HELP).

Early Childhood

The Chelsea-BU project has implemented two activities to improve early childhood education. First, an early childhood coordinator was hired to work with BU and Chelsea staff on plans for the Early Learning Center, which opened in the autumn of 1990. This center, serving preschool and kindergarten students, is a model of the preventive, integrated educational services espoused by BU and its president, John Silber. The center integrates services for special education students into regular classrooms, and provides two-way bilingual education to both English and non-English speaking children. The center also offers extended day care. The project also implemented a program to instruct family day care providers and to provide them with ongoing technical assistance by using telecommunications.

Health Care

The establishment of the Health Care, Counseling, and Coordination Center at the high school in the fall of 1990 is one element in what is a multifaceted effort to tackle problems that impede academic success. If the center is successful and self-sustaining, it will serve as a model for addressing the health care needs of children in other communities and for establishing constructive working relationships between communities and outside organizations. The project also provided dental care to some students at Chelsea.

Curriculum Development

The Chelsea-BU project was successful in developing curriculum objectives for the school system, which had previously had no clear direction. The objectives are to be implemented during the second year of the project, in grades K - 5. If accepted and adhered to by the teachers, these objectives can be used to assess academic progress and to develop individual learning plans.

Future Plans

The enabling legislation and official agreement between Chelsea and Boston University specified 17 areas in which BU must report its progress every year. The management team subsequently adopted these areas as goals by which to assess change and progress in Chelsea. Unlike the action plan, these goals are very broad and do not reflect annual priorities for the Chelsea-BU project. However, a new set of priorities, with accompanying staff assignments, was formulated for the period from February 1990 through June 1991. A revised draft was released for the 1990-91 school year. These are the goals and priorities that will be used in the future.

The new priorities reflect some of the realities that became apparent during the first year, including:

- The financial setbacks, including those of the state, with which the Chelsea-BU project must grapple;
- The importance of building community rapport;
- The need to address the little problems -- for example, the lack of reliable, inexpensive transportation between BU and Chelsea -- that cause good ideas such as the tutoring program to flounder; and
- The problems inherent in the exhausting additional workload that has been taken on by selected members of the BU staff.

These priorities contain broad references to the original plan, including many of the elements proposed in the original documents, such as the Early Childhood Learning Center, facilities development, the individual learning plans, computerization, staff development, and inclusion of parents both as parents and learners.

The behavior of complex social systems such as Chelsea is often chaotic. It is not surprising that the management team's approach has veered from the neatly structured, as the team attempts to make progress on its priorities resolving numerous unforeseen problems, large and small. Although the new priorities are less lofty than those of the original action plan, they demonstrate an intention to continue toward the original goals, as can be seen both in the achievements of the first year and in the activities planned for the second year.

Problems

The Chelsea-BU project encountered two significant types of problems this year: financial problems and problems of rapport between the two entities.

Finance

Raising funds for the various components of the project and dealing with the problems endemic to such a limited school budget required substantial time and energy on the part of the management team. Fundraising got off to a slow start, but by the end of the year the Chelsea-BU project was only $800,000 short of its goal of $3 million. Although this is an enormous amount that could determine whether big-ticket items (such as establishing a system to develop individual learning plans) can be implemented, it represents only a 27 percent shortfall.

It is not uncommon for funding organizations, even those that support innovative activities, to be somewhat cautious in awarding funds because they want assurance that they are not throwing their money away, even on a good idea. They look for evidence of commitment, planning, and preparation to know that once they provide their funds, the idea is likely to be successfully implemented. If BU can establish sufficient rapport with the Chelsea community to convince foundations that the Chelsea-BU project is a stable, successful, collaborative effort, there may be a snowball effect in obtaining funds. Of course, in an economic downturn, competition for funds may increase.

Although fewer dollars could delay or even stop the implementation of some activities, for the moment at least the project as a whole is still on track. In fact, many inexpensive activities have been started that could encourage greater commitment on the part of the teachers, parents, and community, to the idea of improving the schools. This commitment could expand the pool of human resources that could be drawn upon from Chelsea and, in turn, encourage support from outside foundations.

Perhaps more dire is the economic outlook for the Chelsea School funds that must come from state and local government sources. The Chelsea-BU project was rocked from the beginning with teacher negotiations and pending teacher strikes that stemmed from the extremely limited funds that were available from Chelsea. As indicated by Dean Greer, the funds that are raised by grants cannot supplant the fiscal responsibilities that rightfully belong to Chelsea and the state of Massachusetts.

Establishing Working Rapport

The most serious problem that the Chelsea-BU project encountered during the first year of the agreement was the friction between BU and various groups within Chelsea. Any time that roles change, it becomes important to figure out how the players will relate to each other in new ways. This is especially true when the changes are both structurally significant and controversial, as is the case of the Chelsea-BU agreement.

The initial concern in Chelsea reflected the major conflict that had surfaced during enactment of the agreement: the fear that the public's business would not be conducted in public or subject to the safeguards normally imposed on government bodies. By the end of the first year concern about this issue -- and about not having access to the key decision makers -- has diminished. Clearly, members of the management team and Superintendent Lam make themselves available to parents, teachers, and minority community leaders. In fact they are more accessible, some argue, than the school committee.

What remains is the need to resolve some fundamental process issues -- the relations among the management team, the Chelsea Executive Advisory Committee (CEAC), the Chelsea School Committee, and parent groups -- as Dean Greer acknowledged in his 1989-90 annual progress report. Differences continue to exist among these entities over the ways in which BU should implement change, interact with other stakeholders, and take into account the opinions of others in the decision making process.

The School Committee. The Chelsea-BU agreement defines specific powers for the school committee, such as the right to request information as well as to reconsider BU's decisions and ultimately to terminate the agreement. All these powers are reactive or defensive. Moreover, the formal relationship between the committee and the superintendent, who is hired by the management team, remains unclear.

What the written agreement failed to provide is a proactive or positive role for the school committee in support of the reforms or in lieu of its former powers and practices. Management team efforts to provide a new role for the school committee -- as an ongoing advisory committee and liaison with the community -- have not been successful. Attempts to build trust between the two entities also have fallen short. The lack of consensus about the school committee's role and its relationships with the management team and superintendent pose a continuing threat not only to operating the school district effectively but also to the agreement itself.

BU's first priority was to make changes to produce a functioning school system. Obtaining broad-based input into the decisions often took a back seat to moving quickly ahead. This has given rise to criticism for the way in which BU has gone about implementing programs. The BU management team seems to be working hard to resolve tensions regarding process, but the team's desire to move ahead quickly on the goals they perceive as obvious is still encountering resistance in Chelsea.

The Chelsea Community. Creating a relationship based on trust between BU and Chelsea will be no small accomplishment. Interviews with school committee members and community leaders revealed deep resentment against BU for making Chelsea look bad in the eyes of the nation.

BU's outreach to the Chelsea community has occurred on both formal and informal levels. Although small in scope, many of the outreach activities that occurred during the first year have the potential to solidify relations between BU and community representatives on a personal level, primarily because the needs are being defined by Chelsea residents. The challenge for BU will be to determine how best to integrate these efforts into its school-based activities, particularly those involving the home and parents.

One of the most difficult issues in establishing effective relations between BU and Chelsea has been determining how much input from community representatives in decisions affecting the agreement is appropriate and sufficient. Although community leaders cite examples where community input was sought and used effectively, the prevailing perception among community leaders in Chelsea and among certain BU staff is that many BU representatives know what they want to do and are not really interested in receiving other views or concerns, particularly on educational issues.

Despite conflicts that have occurred during the first year of the partnership, the stakeholders agree on several key points:

- The critical nature of Chelsea's educational and socioeconomic needs and the inadequacy of internal resources to address these needs.
- Support for BU's comprehensive approach to improving education in Chelsea, which links the school with the home and focuses on all levels, prekindergarten to adult.
- Recognition of Superintendent Lam's effectiveness. Many observers consider Lam's selection to be superintendent as BU's single most important contribution in Chelsea to date -- not only because she is bilingual and shares a Hispanic heritage with the majority of Chelsea's students, but because she has worked tirelessly with students, teachers, and parents to improve the Chelsea schools.

- Acknowledgement of the management team's good faith efforts to operate openly and to be accessible, allaying initial fears that BU would make all decisions behind closed doors.

These areas of consensus provide a common ground for addressing the concerns about process that have been the major cause of contention in the partnership to date.

Several steps could be taken to enhance Chelsea-BU relations:

- BU needs to make better use of the annual progress reports as a planning and strategic vehicle. One of the best ways to build public understanding of and support for the agreement is through the dissemination of periodic progress reports. Interviews with Chelsea community leaders indicate that they are not clear about what the priorities are or how BU proposes to track progress. For example, some leaders assumed that the five-year action plan contained in the 1988 study of Chelsea, would be used for this purpose.

- BU needs to provide a more focused, coordinated action plan that not only integrates the 17 goals of the management team with those of the superintendent, but also

    - sets forth short-term and long-term priorities with operational objectives;
    - ties the goals more effectively together into an integrated package;
    - shows how each goal relates to the others; and, given the difficulty in raising funds; and
    - uses the goals more strategically to target development efforts.

Concluding Comments

The Chelsea-BU partnership has implemented numerous programs and activities and made progress in several areas of its plan during the first year. Furthermore, what began, in the words of BU Assistant Dean Ted Sharp, as "an arranged marriage" between two seemingly incompatible entities -- BU and Chelsea -- appears to have evolved into something quite different. The first year certainly was no honeymoon. But as the one-on-one contacts increase, BU and Chelsea appear to be settling more comfortably into what could become a meaningful relationship. This change, substantiated by interviews with Chelsea administrators and teachers, BU faculty, and members of the Chelsea oversight panel, indicates that the Chelsea-BU agreement may well have weathered an important anniversary.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

As this report indicates, the first year of the Chelsea-BU partnership was extremely busy and time consuming for those involved. Yet so many participants took time away from their hectic schedules to meet with us and share their knowledge and opinions. This report would not have been possible without the participation of the many Chelsea administrators, teachers, school committee members, board of aldermen, and residents who so willingly met with us and provided us with materials. Members of the Boston University management team and faculty working with the project also spent many hours discussing the project with us. Their cooperation is greatly appreciated.

The study also benefitted greatly from the active participation of an outside advisory panel. Their comments and suggestions, as well as their general support to the project, proved invaluable. The panel consisted of: Dr. Edgar Epps, Professor of Education, The University of Chicago; Dr. Floretta McKenzie, President, The McKenzie Group; Dr. Andrew Porter, Professor, Department of Education, University of Wisconsin, Madison; Dr. Peter Rossi, Director, Social and Demographic Research Institute, University of Massachusetts, Amherst; Dr. Robert Slavin, Center for Research on Effective Schooling for Disadvantaged Students, The Johns Hopkins University; Dr. Mirian Stearns, Executive Director, The Center for Health, Education and Social Systems Research, SRI International; and Dr. Maria Tukeva, Washington, D.C.

Staff from the U.S. Department of Education were also tremendously helpful and this study benefitted from their involvement.

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CHAPTER 1

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CHELSEA SCHOOL PROJECT: A CASE STUDY

Introduction

Chelsea, Massachusetts is a microcosm of an urban community in transition. Located a bridge away from Boston, Chelsea has experienced profound socioeconomic and cultural changes in recent years, as highlighted in an article in Newsweek, September 17, 1990:

> Chelsea (population: 26,000) once boasted a quality school system that served generations of successful Italian, Irish, and Jewish communities. Horatio Alger graduated from Chelsea High some 140 years ago. But there are few modern-day Horatio Alger stories read or lived there today. Over the last 60 years, the population has shrunk by half, fleeing along with the city's once strong industrial base. What's left is a litany of underclass woes. Chelsea is the state's poorest community.

Although it is less than two square miles in size and has a student population of only 3,600, Chelsea manifests many of the same characteristics of larger urban school systems across the country: it is poor and ethnically diverse; student performance is low and dropout rates are high; and students' and parents' needs extend beyond the classroom because of inadequate health care and employment opportunities. In addition, compared with many other urban areas, Chelsea lacks the economic resources, administrative staff, and political base necessary to support its schools.

In 1987 the Chelsea School Committee (school board) requested that Boston University (BU) consider managing and operating the Chelsea school system. BU responded with a comprehensive study, directed by its School of Management, of all functions of the local district. In addition to outlining the strengths and weaknesses of the existing system, the study proposed a comprehensive ten-year plan for BU to manage the Chelsea public schools concentrating on programs that would make education a cooperative enterprise among schools, parents, and children.

Following a contentious approval process involving the Chelsea Board of Aldermen (city council), and the Massachusetts General Court (state legislature), the Chelsea School Committee and Boston University's trustees entered into a ten-year partnership beginning in June 1989. Under the provisions of the agreement, the members of the school committee would continue to be elected by the voters of Chelsea every two years but authority to govern and manage the school system would be assumed by BU.

This landmark agreement is significant for two reasons.

1. It acknowledges Chelsea's broader socioeconomic needs by making "family schools" the cornerstone of the reform efforts -- an approach that focuses on educating students of all ages, from prekindergarteners to adults.

2. This is the first time that a private university has assumed control of an entire school system. Accordingly, the experiences of Chelsea and Boston University could prove invaluable to school districts nationwide -- in determining both what works and what may not -- when implementing a comprehensive, top-down restructuring of a school system.

Purposes of this Study

This study has three purposes.

1. It documents and describes the history of the Chelsea-BU agreement and implementation during the first year of operation, thus providing a case study to date.
2. It establishes the analytical groundwork for a longitudinal evaluation of the implementation process and ultimately of the effects of the project on the lives of Chelsea's students as well as on the schools and community.
3. It contains important lessons for other people or groups committed to addressing the educational and community needs of economically poor, culturally varied urban school systems. Chelsea's and Boston University's experiences should prove useful not only for other school districts that need outside assistance, but also for universities and other private sector entities that are rethinking their own institutional missions.

Obviously it would be inappropriate and foolish to attempt to judge the success of a ten-year project by assessing its accomplishments or lack of them in its first year unless, of course, the project was unable to sustain itself beyond its first year. This it has done. Whether the project will survive its difficulties and meet its original goals, however, remains to be seen.

Methodology

In conducting this study, Pelavin Associates:

- Collected and reviewed documents that provide a framework for understanding the Chelsea-BU agreement.
- Conducted interviews with key Chelsea, BU, and state government participants in the passage of the agreement and its implementation to date and with key representatives from BU, including the president and members of the management team; members of the Chelsea School Committee, the superintendent, and other administrators; selected state legislators and staff; members of the State Oversight Panel and officials of the Department of Education; Chelsea education and community leaders; and external funders of the Chelsea-BU agreement. Multiple interviews were conducted with the management team and the superintendent, in order to capture changes over time. (A complete list of people interviewed is contained in Appendix A.) These discussions enabled us to identify key programs

that were planned or implemented the first year, events that enhanced or impeded implementation, and the perceptions of key stakeholders.

- Observed selected activities during the first year, including a school committee meeting and staff development and curriculum workshops for Chelsea teachers.
- Collected baseline student data for the 1988-89 and 1989-90 school years, to serve as the foundation for a longitudinal evaluation of student performance.
- Developed a teacher survey to identify teachers' needs and perceptions of first year activities.

This study has made an effort to capture the perceptions of the key participants about what happened and why and their thoughts about what lessons they have learned with benefit of hindsight. To these perceptions, we have added our own, as professional and impartial evaluators, of what we heard, read, and observed.

In addition, Appendix B contains some thoughts of a senior member of the research team about the implications of the first year of the Chelsea project, in the hope that they may be further examined in later evaluations of the Chelsea-BU project and other school reforms. It is important for other groups, whether a university or some business coalition, that attempt to take a "top-down, outsider" approach to school reform to understand the tensions that can develop between the management team and the local community -- tensions that can undercut reform efforts anywhere.

CHAPTER 2

HISTORY OF THE CHELSEA-BOSTON UNIVERSITY AGREEMENT

The Decline of the Chelsea Schools

Despite its small size and population, by the late 1980s Chelsea had come to exhibit many of the characteristics associated with major urban communities in decline:

- The population of Chelsea is half of what it was 30 years ago; newcomers from poorer Latin American and Southeast Asian countries have taken the place of white ethnic immigrants.
- In 1988 the median household income in Chelsea was $11,200, the lowest of any city in Massachusetts and 36 percent below the state median.
- More than 28 percent of Chelsea families are headed by single parents; nearly one-third of the community receive public assistance, including the families of almost three-fourths of Chelsea's public school students.
- The relative stability in the total number of students since the early 1980s masks the transient nature of student enrollments within the district.
- The student body is 55 percent Hispanic, 28 percent white, 12 percent Asian, and 5 percent black. A majority speak English as a second language. More than one-fifth of the students speak one of 11 different languages and are unable to perform their schoolwork in English.
- Student test scores are consistently among the lowest in Massachusetts; in 1988 fewer than half of Chelsea's ninth graders passed the state-mandated basic skills tests, compared with a statewide pass rate of 79 percent.
- More than half of the eighth graders in 1983 dropped out of school before graduating; only 20 percent of students who did graduate went on to college, and of that number, only one in ten attended a four-year institution.
- The teenage pregnancy rate (14 percent) is the third highest in the state; one in four female high school students in Chelsea was either pregnant or already had a child.
- Absenteeism is high among teachers as well as students.
- An active drug trade threatens the community.

Chelsea administrators have been successful in obtaining external funds to meet the community's diverse educational needs. In fiscal year 1987, Chelsea was one of the few cities in Massachusetts to take advantage of every state and federal categorical grant for which it was eligible. Despite these efforts, the community's poor economic base continues to hamper the school district's ability to support a comprehensive educational program for a diverse student population. For example:

- Chelsea has one of the poorest property tax bases in Massachusetts. In 1989, property valuation per capita was $40,540, about 63 percent of the state average.
- Commercial property represents only 21.5 percent of the district's tax base. Residential property owners must bear a relatively large share of the property tax to support schools and other public services.
- Because of its low tax base, Chelsea must depend heavily on state aid to support its public schools. In 1989 the state provided 62 percent of school revenues in Chelsea but only about 36 percent statewide.
- In 1985 the district was on the brink of insolvency and required a $5 million, interest-free loan from the Massachusetts legislature to maintain school services.

In addition, education does not appear to be the top priority of Chelsea's political leadership; for example:

- Chelsea allocates only 17 cents per tax dollar for education, the lowest amount of any local jurisdiction in the state.
- The board of aldermen contributes less than 20 percent of local revenues to the schools, substantially less than the 31 percent spent by other Massachusetts cities and the 54 percent average expended statewide.
- Although Chelsea is among the bottom five local jurisdictions in per capita spending for education, it ranks among the top five in per capita spending for police and fire protection.
- The school budget does not provide adequate administrative support to operate the district. In 1988 (prior to the Chelsea-BU agreement) the central office consisted solely of the superintendent, seven district administrators, and support staff; fiscal operations were maintained by the city government.
- Chelsea is the only city or town in Massachusetts that had not taken advantage of the state's school building assistance program, in operation since 1947, which funds 90 percent of construction costs for districts implementing a minority balance plan.

Given the severity of Chelsea's educational and social needs, as well as the lack of resources and local support, many people interviewed for this study argued that it was a question of when some outside entity would assume control of the school system and not whether outside control would occur. In fact, former Chelsea school committees had entertained the notion of inviting the state to place the district into receivership.

Boston University's Initial Involvement with Chelsea

In 1987, the Chelsea School Committee requested that Boston University consider managing and operating the Chelsea school system. The invitation was extended to John Silber, president of Boston University, by Andrew Quigley -- a former Chelsea mayor, state legislator, publisher of Chelsea's major local newspaper, The Chelsea Record, and a 30-year veteran of the school committee.

Silber and BU had established a reputation for reaching out to the public schools in and around Boston. For example, BU had provided the special masters that oversaw implementation of Boston's court-ordered desegregation plan. BU's Schools of Education and Social Work have placed their students in internship programs within neighboring school districts, including Chelsea, for a number of years. BU provides a leadership academy for Boston principals. BU is the largest financial contributor to the Boston Higher Education Partnership, a part of the Boston Compact that gives Boston students increased access to college and employment in return for an ongoing district commitment to improving the public schools. Every year, three graduates from each of Boston's 17 high schools receive full scholarships to attend BU. Moreover, BU had previously volunteered to manage the Boston and Lowell school districts, but these earlier offers had been rejected.

The first step in the agreement between Chelsea and BU was a comprehensive study, funded primarily by the U.S. and Massachusetts departments of education and conducted over ten months by approximately 60 BU faculty members from seven different schools under the direction of the School of Management. The 232-page report, titled A Model for Excellence in Education, contains a demographic profile of Chelsea and seeks to analyze all aspects of the system, including curriculum and instruction, personnel, management, finance, and support services. (The table of contents of this report, shown in Appendix C, illustrates the broad scope of the report.) It paints a stark picture of a community and a school district in trouble, unable to solve their problems. The report begins:

> Chelsea is a city in crisis. Its streets are battlegrounds in the war on drugs and its residents are frightened into isolation by the crime and violence outside their doors. Rapid demographic and social changes have weakened Chelsea's sense of continuity and familiarity. While many families struggle to secure basic necessities, such as decent housing and affordable health care, the city as a whole suffers from a weak economic foundation . . . .
>
> Standing amidst this social and economic milieu, it is not surprising that Chelsea's schools are also in crisis . . . . Poor leadership at both the city and school levels is a major factor; there is no one who has challenged the prevailing assumption that the schools are powerless to reverse this decline.

The report set forth 17 goals based on a comprehensive reform strategy designed to link education with homes and families (see Exhibit 1). A five-year action plan was also proposed as "a frame of reference by which to evaluate Boston University's success or failure in managing the Chelsea schools." (The details of the goals and action plan are discussed in Chapter 4 of this report.)

EXHIBIT 1

Chelsea-BU Policy Goals

1. Revitalize the curriculum of the school system so as to increase the rigor and breadth of the courses of instruction, including practice in organizing, integrating, and applying knowledge with an emphasis on reasoning, mastery of content, and problem solving;

2. Establish programs of professional development for school personnel and provide learning opportunities for parents;

3. Improve test scores of students in the school system, especially the scores for each school and the system as a whole in the elementary grades in reading, writing, and mathematics;

4. Decrease the dropout rate;

5. Increase the average daily student attendance rate;

6. Increase the number of high school graduates;

7. Increase the number of high school graduates going on to attend four-year colleges;

8. Increase the number of job placements for graduates;

9. Develop a community school program through which before school, after school, and summer programs are offered to students in the school system and adult education classes for inhabitants of the city;

10. Identify and encourage the utilization of community resources;

11. Establish programs which link the homes to the schools;

12. Decrease teacher absenteeism;

13. Improve the financial management of the school system and expand the range of operating funds available to the school system;

14. Increase salaries and benefits for all staff, including raising the average teacher salary to make it competitive with the statewide average;

15. Construct effective recruiting, hiring, and retention procedures for staff members;

16. Establish student assessment designs and procedures which are of assistance in monitoring programs and which act as incentives for staff members in each school; and

17. Seek to expand and modernize physical facilities in the school system.

Approval of the Chelsea-BU Agreement

The Political Context

Before Boston University could assume management of the Chelsea public schools, the agreement had to win approval from three government entities: the Chelsea School Committee, the Chelsea Board of Aldermen, and the Massachusetts General Court.

The Chelsea School Committee consists of seven members, all of whom are elected at-large every two years. The school committee received the BU response on May 12, 1988, and on July 26, adopted a resolution requesting Boston University to draft a formal agreement and enabling legislation to transfer the governance and management of the school district from the Chelsea School Committee to Boston University. On November 29, following a public hearing, the school committee voted 5 to 2 to approve the proposed relationship between the two entities for a ten-year period subject to a final vote later. The school committee made its vote final the following March by a vote of 4 to 2 to 1. On April 24, 1989, the Chelsea Board of Aldermen approved a home rule petition requesting the Massachusetts General Court to ratify the transfer of authority.

By the time the petition reached the Massachusetts legislature, the Chelsea-BU agreement had attracted national attention because of the opposition of several groups, particularly the teachers and the Hispanic community in Chelsea, who perceived Silber as antiunion and antibilingual education. After the Chelsea School Committee voted for the agreement in March, the teachers' union filed suit in Massachusetts Superior Court to block implementation of the agreement; the court took no action. The union also recruited Albert Shanker, a long-term union activist and president of the American Federation of Teachers, to testify before the Massachusetts General Court. The union basically questioned whether an elected school board had the right to turn over its governance responsibilities to a private entity, on grounds that such action might jeopardize teachers' due process and collective bargaining rights and limit their access to personnel files. The union argued that BU's management of Chelsea would result in privatization of the public school, a claim hotly disputed by BU officials, who likened their proposed role to that of city manager appointed by elected school officials to run the district.

Meanwhile a coalition of Hispanic advocacy, service, and parent organizations charged that the failure to translate the proposed agreement into Spanish and the school committee's refusal to allow Hispanic representatives to testify in public prior to the March 29 vote had denied them adequate participation in the decision making process. Hispanic community leaders, aware of Silber's well-known criticism of bilingual programs, also feared that BU would eliminate Chelsea's bilingual education programs.

Also voicing reservations about the proposed agreement -- primarily over the need for BU to comply with the state's public meeting and public records laws -- were the State Board of Education, the secretary of state and the state inspector general for Massachusetts, Common Cause, and the national Parent Teacher Association (PTA).

The agreement was revised twice before it finally reached the legislature. For example, the reporting requirements on funds obtained by BU for Chelsea and the degree of public access to personnel and other school records were clarified, and the agreement stipulated that "all final policy decisions had to be made in public." These revisions prompted the State Board of Education to give the agreement its qualified endorsement. A memorandum from the Department of Education's legal counsel to the commissioner of education highlighted the changes while pinpointing the fundamental reason for the remaining reservations: "It is hard to protect the prerogatives of a private institution such as BU and at the same time conform its conduct of public school business to the requirements that apply to school committees." The teachers' union and the Hispanic community remained firmly opposed to the agreement.

The following factors were in favor of the Chelsea-BU agreement:

1. Everyone agreed that Chelsea's economic and educational problems were serious and that BU's proposed solutions were ambitious and comprehensive. Thus the question became not whether BU should be allowed to assume control of Chelsea, but what alternatives existed to solve Chelsea's problems. Given the worsening state of the Massachusetts economy, there simply were none that were more attractive.

2. The enabling legislation limited the provisions to Chelsea, thus making it of little direct concern to lawmakers from other districts.

3. Chelsea's political leadership favored the agreement and had requested legislative approval.

4. Richard Voke, the Chelsea representative and primary sponsor of the petition, also chaired the House Ways and Means Committee and thus presided over appropriation decisions affecting the program and budget priorities of his colleagues. The agreement had an equally powerful ally in William Bulger, long-time president of the state senate.

On May 31, 1989, the House passed the enabling legislation by a voice vote. The state senate approved the measure on June 5 by a vote of 29 to 10, with the House adding its final approval of minor senate amendments by a vote of 126 to 25 one day later.

Despite expressing some misgivings about the agreement, Governor Dukakis signed it into law on June 13. He also directed the State Board of Education to appoint a special blue-ribbon oversight committee, which would periodically meet and issue reports to the state board on (1) whether the educational goals of the agreement were being met; and (2) whether the agreement was being implemented in a manner that guaranteed public accountability, fairness, and openness.

After the governor signed the enabling legislation, 51 Hispanic residents from Chelsea filed suit in the State Superior Judicial Court, asserting that the agreement was unconstitutional because it turned over the operation of the school system to a private entity. The New England Legal Foundation, a nonprofit law firm representing other Chelsea parents, countersued. At this writing, all these suits (plus the one filed by Chelsea's Teachers' Union) are pending.

Before the agreement was proposed, the Hispanic community had not been an organized political force in Chelsea but this situation changed quickly with BU's pending takeover of the Chelsea schools. Frustrated by their lack of participation in the decisions, Hispanic community leaders rallied Chelsea residents to conduct a massive voter registration drive; as a result, in November 1989 a Hispanic was elected to the Chelsea School Committee for the first time.

Key Provisions of the Chelsea-BU Agreement

The agreement delegated authority to BU for a ten-year period ending June 30, 1998, to act on behalf of and instead of the Chelsea School Committee in managing, supervising, and overseeing all school district operations. The university thus acquired authority to hire the superintendent; to enter into collective bargaining agreements; set curriculum, instruction, and personnel policies; to formulate the annual budget and oversee expenditures; and to seek external funds. BU, in turn, was required to implement a comprehensive reform plan designed to improve the entire school district. These efforts were to be based on the action plan outlined in the 1988 BU study (see Appendix D) and were intended to implement the 17 policy goals mentioned earlier (see Exhibit 1).

In addition, the agreement contained specific requirements designed primarily to ensure that public education was in fact conducted with sufficient public input and openness. Accordingly, BU was required to --

- Provide the Chelsea School Committee with monthly reports on managing the system and implementing programs; provide the committee, mayor, and board of aldermen with an annual progress report; and, beginning on September 1, 1992, provide the Massachusetts General Court, the State Board of Education, and the Chelsea School Committee with annual reports detailing progress on meeting each of the 17 policy goals.

- Create broadly representative groups to which it would provide information and from which it would solicit advice in reforming the system. (This provision had been suggested initially by one of Chelsea's parent activists.)

- Make all final decisions, acting in its capacity as the school committee, in public.

- Maintain open access to all city and school district records, excluding private BU records and give school employees or their public employee organization access to their personnel records.

Although district policy making and oversight functions were delegated to BU, the Chelsea School Committee retained specific powers. Its seven members would continue to be elected and to meet as an official body during the ten-year period, and the school committee was granted what amounted to an oversight role of BU's management of the school system. Although not empowered to overturn the University's decisions, it could, by a two-thirds vote, require BU to reconsider its decisions. Even more important, the agreement empowered the school committee, by a simple majority vote, to sever its relationship with BU.

Conversely, BU also could terminate the agreement at any time without cause, particularly in the event of insufficient funds. Language in the agreement delineated the mutually accepted premise that the city's support for education would not be diminished or supplanted and that the agreement's ultimate success depended on the collective support of city officials, the community, state and federal governments, parents, and business.

CHAPTER 3

KEY STAKEHOLDERS

Governance changes are what make the Chelsea-BU agreement unique and they have had a decided impact on activities in Chelsea during the first year. This chapter provides information on the key stakeholders (the Chelsea School Committee, the BU management team, the Chelsea Executive Advisory Committee, and the Chelsea Oversight Panel), their responsibilities, and their interrelationships during the initial year of implementation.

Chelsea School Committee

The school committee's decision to give up control over the Chelsea schools was never unanimous. The members who served on the committee during 1988-89 initially approved the Chelsea-BU agreement by a vote of 5 to 2. They endorsed the final agreement by a vote of 4 to 2 with one abstention. Key turnovers during 1990 made school committee support even more precarious. Apparently only three of the seven members remain solidly behind the agreement with BU.

1. Andrew Quigley, the staunchest proponent of the agreement and the person who invited BU to conduct the 1988 study of Chelsea, died in 1990. He was replaced by Rosemarie Carlisle, an active PTA member and supporter of the agreement, who had run unsuccessfully for the school committee in 1989.

2. Morris Seigal, a former Chelsea teacher and principal for 36 years, was an original proponent of the agreement and remains its most ardent defender.

3. John Brennan, who as mayor of Chelsea is a voting member of the school committee, also voted for the agreement and remains supportive.

4. Elizabeth McBride has served on the school committee for 12 years; she presided when the agreement was approved but voted against it and continues to voice reservations.

5. Anthony Tiro, the current chairman, is the senior member of the school committee. Tiro initially voted in favor of the agreement but did not cast a vote for the final plan and is currently the school committee's most outspoken critic of BU's management of the school system.

6. Lydia Walata, serving her third term on the school committee, was the other original dissenting vote against the agreement.

7. Bruce Robinson, a strong advocate of the agreement, moved away from Chelsea and therefore did not run for reelection in 1989. His seat was taken by Marta Rosa, the first Hispanic resident in Chelsea ever elected to the school committee. Rosa headed the Chelsea Hispanic Commission when it was a plaintiff in the court suit filed by the Hispanic community against the agreement.

The current school committee members remain divided in their assessment of the first year activities under the Chelsea-BU agreement. The strongest proponents caution that school improvements take time. Opponents criticize BU for not providing a more important role for the school committee (although BU is not bound to do this by the agreement) and for not keeping the committee informed promptly, particularly regarding personnel decisions (in order to avoid embarrassment when constituents ask them for explanations). Yet most proponents and opponents have adopted a wait-and-see attitude, recognizing that BU offers the promise of additional resources and support that would not otherwise be available to Chelsea and that returning back to the old governance system after so little time would be too disruptive for the district.

Boston University Management Team

Although BU's School of Management conducted the 1988 study of Chelsea, Silber gave the School of Education the primary responsibility for overseeing the Chelsea school system and for implementing the agreement. Most of the eight-person management team came from the School of Education (SED). The head of the management team was recruited by Silber to manage the Chelsea-BU agreement, and each member was selected for his or her expertise in a particular area -- education administration, curriculum development, facility planning, financial management, health care, bilingual education, and legal analysis.

Members of the BU management team are as follows:

- Peter Greer, dean of the School of Education since July 1988, has overall management responsibility for the agreement. Greer is a former local superintendent, elected school committee member, deputy under secretary for intergovernmental and interagency affairs in the U.S. Department of Education, and a BU graduate.

- Ted Sharp, assistant dean for special programs in the SED, and vice chairman of the management team, is responsible for the day-to-day administration of the agreement. Sharp is a former teacher and local superintendent, and was Greer's executive assistant in the U.S. Department of Education.

- Carole Greenes, associate dean for research, development, and advanced academic programs and a professor of mathematics education in the SED, is the author of several math textbooks. Greenes has primary responsibility for overseeing revisions in Chelsea's curriculum, developing technology plans, and identifying opportunities and coordinating efforts to secure outside funding for Chelsea projects.

- Robert Sperber, special assistant to Silber and professor of education, is also Director of BU's Leadership Academy, which prepares principals for the Boston Public Schools. Sperber, a former local superintendent, has the primary responsibility for developing a facility plan for Chelsea.

- Robert Master, M.D., chief of the Health Services Section of BU's School of Public Health, is responsible for coordinating the provision of health care services to Chelsea students.

- Paul Clemente, BU's associate vice president for financial affairs, has lead responsibility for upgrading Chelsea's financial practices and procedures.

- Roselmina (Lee) Indrisano, who heads the Department of Developmental Studies and Counseling Psychology in the SED, specializes in the remediation of disabling conditions that inhibit literacy development. A former Chelsea teacher, Indrisano is helping Chelsea's elementary teachers develop and implement curriculum objectives for reading and language arts.

- Maria Brisk, associate professor and director of the Bilingual Education Program in BU's School of Education, has been working on bilingual and multicultural activities in Chelsea and on increasing parental involvement in the schools.

- Although not a member of the management team, Michael Rosen, BU's legal counsel and a key negotiator of the Chelsea-BU agreement, continues to furnish legal advice on operating the school district.

In addition, BU created an advisory committee, with representatives from 15 schools across the BU campus, to share information on Chelsea programs and to coordinate individual school activities in Chelsea. Some parts of BU, such as the School of Social Work, were able to carry out new initiatives with the Chelsea school district by working through contacts they already had within the Chelsea community -- in this case, providing graduate students for field-based placements in Chelsea and coordinating its activities with community service agencies.

During the first year of the agreement, the management team took the following actions:

- Hired a new Superintendent.

- Negotiated a new three-year contract with the Chelsea Teachers' Union, which included a sizable salary increase and a new performance evaluation system.

- Enhanced the district's administrative capacity by creating several new positions (an executive assistant for the superintendent, an early childhood coordinator, and a business manager) and improved the district's financial and management information systems.

- Created a community advisory body (the Chelsea Executive Advisory Committee).

- Raised nearly $2.2 million in outside funds for Chelsea programs and activities.

Each of these initiatives is described in greater detail later in this report.

Chelsea Executive Advisory Committee (CEAC)

In accordance with the Chelsea-BU agreement, BU was required to establish "broadly-based representative groups" to advise it on efforts to reform the district. The agreement emphasized the need for BU to consult with Chelsea parents, residents, citizen groups, teachers, and other school employees. Accordingly, the management team created the Chelsea Executive Advisory Committee (CEAC). Dean Greer selected the original nine organizations, each of which selected a representative to serve on CEAC:

1. Chelsea Human Services Collaborative (representing 41 state, city, and nonprofit human service agencies)
2. Chelsea Teachers' Union
3. Chelsea Commission on Hispanic Affairs
4. Parent-Teacher Council
5. Special Education Parents Advisory Committee (PAC)
6. Bilingual PAC
7. Chelsea Chamber of Commerce
8. Chelsea Administrators' Union
9. Chelsea Coalition for Quality Education (CCQE) (representing multicultural, parent education advocacy groups)

Another six members were then recommended by the nine original members and approved by the BU management team. Membership was to include representatives from the following organizations or community segments:

1. The Chelsea African-American Community
2. The Religious Community
3. The Chelsea High School Student Council
4. Choice Thru Education, Inc. (a dropout prevention program)
5. The Southeast Asian Community
6. The Elderly Community.

Initially, CEAC had difficulty defining its role and its relationship to the management team. As a result, most early CEAC meetings were contentious. The problems could probably have been anticipated for several reasons:

1. Specific responsibilities for CEAC had not been spelled out in the terms of the Chelsea-BU agreement; the job of defining CEAC's role was left to its membership and to BU's management team. CEAC's membership organizations had little experience in working together as a single, representative body on a common agenda.

2. It was unclear whether individual members were expected to consult with their own organizations before taking positions. This lack of clarity hampered CEAC efforts to resolve internal procedural issues.

3. Prior to enactment of the agreement, some important CEAC members, particularly Chelsea's Hispanic community, had not had an organized political presence in Chelsea; thus they were new to the advisory role process.

In addition, the BU management team purposely did not attempt to specify CEAC's responsibilities. Dean Greer assumed that CEAC representatives would be able to define their own responsibilities, and he did not wish to dictate their roles, particularly so soon after BU had taken over control of the school system and in deference to the sensitivities aroused within the minority community from not having been part of the enactment process.

Although divided initially over what their role should be, CEAC members generally shared a perception that the management team issued pronouncements rather than working collaboratively.

Following the adoption of bylaws clarifying CEAC's role as well as BU's responsibilities to CEAC, however, much of the earlier acrimony and confusion appears to have dissipated. The bylaws reaffirmed the management team's intent to consult with CEAC on major education reform proposals; to have CEAC's advice presented publicly prior to any final management team decision; to give CEAC an opportunity to raise agenda items; to give CEAC information on grant proposals for Chelsea projects; and to consult with CEAC, at its discretion, whenever the Chelsea School Committee requests the management committee to reconsider a decision. CEAC, in turn, views its advisory role more broadly than simply working with the management team, so it has established direct communication with the Chelsea School Committee.

Chelsea Oversight Panel

On June 27, 1989, the State Board of Education, at Governor Dukakis's request, created an oversight panel to monitor implementation of the Chelsea-BU agreement. The panel's role was not to evaluate the merits of the agreement or the intended outcomes, but to focus on process, in order to ensure that the terms of the agreement were met and to provide a forum for the affected parties. The panel's mission statement specified two subjects on which the panel should periodically report to the state board: (1) whether the educational goals were being fulfilled; and (2) whether the agreement was being conducted in a manner that ensured "public accountability, fairness, and openness."

The six panel members appointed by the state board are as follows:

1. Dr. Irwin Blumer, chairman, a graduate of Chelsea High School and superintendent of schools in Newton, a school system in the Boston metropolitan area.

2. John Dunlop, former U.S. Secretary of Labor (1975-76) and currently a Harvard professor emeritus. Dunlop is a nationally recognized expert on labor negotiations and has served as arbitrator in numerous contract disputes, including local negotiations over police and fire contracts in Chelsea.

3. Charles T. Grigsby, owner of an architectural millwork company in Roxbury and former chairman of the State Board of Education.

4. Harold "Doc" Howe, II, former U.S. Commissioner of Education (1966-68) and currently a senior lecturer at the Harvard Graduate School of Education. A former teacher, principal, and local superintendent, Howe is also a nationally renowned expert on strategies to improve the educational achievement of poor children.

5. Richard J. Santagati, former head of a company specializing in business information systems and currently the chief executive officer of a Boston-based national law firm.

6. Miren Uriarte-Gaston, an associate professor in the College of Public and Community Services at the University of Massachusetts-Boston, active in the Hispanic community of Boston. She earned her doctorate at BU and is a licensed clinical social worker.

Diana Lam, who had been a zone superintendent in the Boston Public Schools, also was a panel member before BU selected her as Chelsea superintendent. She has not been replaced on the panel.

Since July 1989 the Chelsea Oversight Panel has met five times, primarily to hear concerns raised by Chelsea School Committee members, CEAC representatives, and Chelsea residents. Informally, the panel has also served as a forum for management team members, Superintendent Lam, Chelsea School Committee members, and CEAC representatives to talk with one another. Panel members have also been encouraged to visit the school district and talk with administrators and teachers.

Panel activities have been limited by a shortage of state funds, initially promised by the governor, to support a part-time staff person to keep panel members informed about Chelsea activities. Instead, the state commissioner of education and senior State Department of Education administrators provide staff support, in addition to their normal responsibilities.

The oversight panel issued its first report in November 1990. According to panel members, the number of complaints heard by the panel has decreased over time, and the BU management team has made a good faith effort to conduct its affairs in public. The members attribute much of the progress to adoption of CEAC bylaws, as well as to the efforts of BU representatives and Superintendent Lam to reach out to Chelsea teachers, parents, and community groups.

After questioning the witnesses in old complaints, panel members have concluded that many of the remaining complaints are based more on old conflicts than on knowledge of current activities inside the schools. But some panel members privately express the opinion that the major stakeholders in Chelsea need to continue to clarify their roles. Panel members also express deep concern about the long-term potential for success under the agreement unless Chelsea's fiscal resources for education and its economic base can be expanded.

Given the contentiousness surrounding approval of the Chelsea-BU agreement, it is not surprising that key stakeholders argued so much over governance issues during the first year of implementation. As one stakeholder described the situation, "It's as if you started out to create a governance system likely to be problematic. No one knows who's on offense. No one knows who's on defense. And no one is quite sure who's got the ball."

The next chapter details how the Chelsea-BU agreement worked in its first year.

CHAPTER 4

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CHELSEA-BU AGREEMENT

Introduction

What difference has BU's presence made to Chelsea during the first year of the historic Chelsea-BU agreement? This chapter attempts to answer this question by--

- Describing the goals and objectives that were planned for the first year of the project and explaining why they changed;
- Describing the activities that actually occurred during the first year of the project; and
- Describing the activities planned for the second year.

Original Goals and Objectives

Boston University's comprehensive ten-year plan to reform the Chelsea school system set forth in A Model for Excellence in Urban Education discusses factors outside the school that foster or exacerbate Chelsea's educational problems. These factors include health, nutrition, and the need for self-help and social skills as well as literacy and language skills among preschool children and their parents. The plan incorporates concepts of using family, schools, and lifelong learning to address the broader problems that many people believe to be an integral part of today's education problems. The plan also calls for extensive facility improvements to increase the school system's ability to serve current needs and to provide this expanded vision.

The plan focuses first on the preschool and primary levels, with the establishment of early learning centers and day care services for all children from kindergarten through grade 6. Improvements in the curriculum and educational approach are to continue up through the grades in an incremental fashion over a four-year time span. Eventually, the entire K-12 curriculum is to be redesigned, with particular attention to relating the substance of the curriculum to the students' lives and community. The curriculum is also to be standardized across the school system.

The plan includes establishing programs that link school and home, providing intergenerational literacy and English-language programs for parents and their preschool children, and establishing special nutrition and health programs for pregnant women and their children until they reach the age of three.

A Model for Excellence in Urban Education contains an action plan that "proposes a frame of reference by which to evaluate Boston University's success or failure in managing Chelsea's schools." This plan includes individual objectives for each of the first five years of the ten-year project (see Appendix D.) Objectives specified for the first year of the action plan are presented in Exhibit 2. The agreement between Boston University and the Chelsea school system

EXHIBIT 2

First-Year of the Action Plan Proposed in the Model for Excellence in Urban Education Report of 1988

Within 30 days after a contract is signed between the parties, Boston University proposes a mobilization of its resources and expertise to accomplish the following actions:

1. A facilities plan will be finalized and submitted to the state for its approval. This plan will include the construction of a new high school and a new elementary school, the renovation of the existing high school, Williams school, and Shurtleff school, and the transition of the four elementary schools to a K-8 structure. It will also include a long-term plan to correct the problem of minority isolation in the schools based on a controlled choice model.

2. Three committees will be formed to make recommendations in the areas of leadership, curriculum, and personnel. These committees, representing Boston University, the Chelsea School Committee, administrators, teachers, parents, students, and the community, will have the following responsibilities:

a.	Leadership	to develop a mission statement for the system and each school, a set of short-term and long-term goals for the system that support this mission, and a strategic plan to achieve these goals.
b.	Curriculum	to develop a long-term plan to redirect curriculum toward school and program objectives.
c.	Personnel	to develop a long-term plan that will improve organizational development, personnel performance, and accountability.

In addition, Boston University will take action on the following priorities:

3. The primary focus will be on kindergarten to third grade in order to revitalize the curriculum, institute new programs and services, and increase training and support for teachers.

4. An intensive training program will be started for all teachers and administrators, with initial emphasis on grades K-3. Each individual will be trained over a three-year period.

5. Plans for a family learning center in each school will be developed, and one such program will be created by the end of the first year to focus the community's attention on educational needs of families.

(continued)

EXHIBIT 2

First-Year of the Action Plan Proposed in the Model for Excellence in Urban Education Report of 1988 (continued)

6. Family school specialists for each school will be identified and trained, and will be integral to all school operations by the beginning of year two.

7. In conjunction with local human service agencies, social workers will be hired and trained, and a community service referral network will be developed.

8. By the end of the first year, comprehensive curriculum plans for kindergarten through grade 12 will be developed in each content area. These plans will gradually be implemented over the next four years.

9. The initial phase of a five-year program to design individual service plans for all Chelsea students will be started in grades K-3.

10. A central computerized management information system will be created to accommodate the accounting, reporting, scheduling, purchasing, budgeting, and general communications needs of the system.

11. A "buddy system" will be developed to provide Chelsea students with role models that they can turn to for support and guidance, initially focusing on grades K-3. These buddies will be older residents and parents, older students, business and community leaders, religious leaders, and Boston University faculty and students.

12. Annual revenues to implement these programs will increase by $2.5 million.

13. A comprehensive computer-assisted instruction program will be designed for all schools and will gradually be implemented over the next three years, initially focusing on grades K-3.

stipulated that the reform of the Chelsea schools should be based upon the action plan, but the agreement also permits modification of the plan to meet changing circumstances such as available funds and prior school year results.

Although several key elements of the action plan have been achieved, at least in part, it is not clear that the management team ever formally used the action plan during the first year of the project. A great deal of the team's energy had to be used to deal with the hostility and resistance to implementation that were not anticipated when the action plan was written. The planners did not foresee the threatened teacher strikes, extensive negotiations and the immediate hiring of a new superintendent, nor did they allow for the time-consuming efforts that would be needed to calm the rancor and build a more cooperative, trusting environment.

The planners also had assumed that the necessary $2.5 million would be available for implementation of the action plan. Unfortunately, funds for the project were slow in coming, were frequently restricted to specific projects when they did come, and were insufficient to pursue all of the first-year goals of the plan, particularly high-cost components such as the individual learning plans. Furthermore, as it became necessary for BU to divert more staff time toward obtaining funds, there was less staff time or energy available to pursue the substantive aspects of the plan.

The Chelsea-BU project also diverged from the action plan because the new superintendent, Diana Lam, was unwilling to ignore the painful needs of current students while plans were made to prevent such needs in the future. When space limitations forced eighth-grade students to be placed in the high school, she reorganized the high school to accommodate these younger students in a separate wing of the school and thus give them a sense of identity. When she realized that more than half the high school students failed two or more courses during the fall semester, she organized an intensive after school and weekend program for these students.

Lam has also instituted relatively inexpensive ideas for school improvement -- particularly improvements that build a sense of involvement, community, and communication among teachers and among parents -- that had simply not been thought of in the action plan. She has presented her ideas in documents that set forth goals and strategies that can be used to assess her accomplishments. To BU's credit, the management team has supported her efforts, provided her with the information she needed and allowed her to carry out and even expand her plans.

The enabling legislation and official agreement between Chelsea and Boston University specified 17 areas in which BU must report its progress every year. The management team subsequently adopted these areas as goals by which to assess change and progress in Chelsea. Unlike the action plan, these goals are very broad and do not reflect annual priorities for the Chelsea-BU project. However, a new set of priorities, with accompanying staff assignments, was formulated for the period from February 1990 through June 1991. A revised draft was released for the 1990-91 school year. These are the goals and priorities that will be used in the future.

As can be seen in Exhibit 3, the new draft priorities that were released in October 1990 are neither so grandiose nor so academically specific as those provided in the original action plan.

EXHIBIT 3

General Priorities in Chelsea for School Year 1990-91

Item			Accountability
1.	Review the fundamental assumptions and goals for the project and compose a public statement that summarizes these as benchmarks for future assessments. (Greer, Sharp, Greenes, Central Administration, other)		Greer
2.	Develop a list of and plan for possible programs for subsequent years (e.g., vocational, bilingual, MASSPEP), while at the same time be flexible during the course of 1990-91. We need to identify some telling ideas that will assist educators everywhere. (Greer, Rosen, et al.)		Greer
3.	Build upon the success that we have experienced in the area of staff development.		
	a.	subject content (match up Chelsea teachers with University faculty) (Greenes)	Greenes
	b.	teaching skills (Saphier's "The Skillful Teacher") (Sperber, Greer)	Sperber
	c.	teacher evaluation (Greer, Sharp)	Greer
	d.	administrators' training and match-ups (Greer, Sharp)	Sharp
	e.	teaching objectives (curriculum teacher training, lead teachers) (Greenes)	Greenes
	f.	support staff (secretaries, custodians, et al.) (Sharp)	Sharp
	g.	Early Childhood Learning Center	Schickedanz
4.	Continue to write grant proposals related to important aspects of the project. (Greenes, McInnis) For example:		Greenes
	a.	Individualized Learning Plans (ILPs)	
	b.	Early Childhood Learning Center	
	c.	General Motors (math/science)	
	d.	Posen (intergenerational literacy)	
	e.	teaching objectives (grades 6-12)	
	f.	Prenatal care (USE CABLE!)	
	g.	moral education	
	h.	staff development	
	i.	health centers	

(Continued)

EXHIBIT 3

General Priorities in Chelsea for School Year 1990-91 (continued)

	j. music, K-12	
	k. use of summers and weekends (remedial and gifted)	
5.	Weave all the threads of the computer program (training, maintenance, instructional, administrative) into a well understood, integrated, and smooth-operating operation. (Greenhalgh)	Greenhalgh
6.	Focus on student achievement and the other sixteen goals to be assessed as part of the first report to the legislature and consistently review information such as the 350-page report.	ALL
7.	Save money with the Chelsea Schools' budget, especially in the area of contracted services. (Lam, Towne, Clemente)	Clemente
8.	Present a facilities plan to the state by January 1, 1991. (Sperber)	Sperber
9.	Bring in $3 million of outside funding and establish a realistic figure for what we need over the next few years. (McInnis)	McInnis
10.	Implement the plan for a comprehensive K-12 music program. (Greenhalgh, Colwell, Sperber, C. Meng)	Greenhalgh
11.	Strive for consistent and favorable local and national media coverage; construct an outreach plan. (Beggs-Sargent, Campbell, Greer) (e.g., tying into the National Agenda)	Beggs-Sargent
12.	Expand and strengthen our tutoring program. (Vaughan)	Vaughan
13.	Establish a Boston University-Chelsea shuttle bus. (McLellan, Clemente)	Greer
14.	Remain aware of the pressure on SED associated with the University's staffing of the Chelsea Project and plan for relief of the pressures. (Greer, Greenes)	Greer
15.	Focus on parent involvement at both the home and school sites, including the work of the School Leadership Councils (training?) (Lam, Rosa, Indrisano, Brisk)	Indrisano
16.	Plan and implement a comprehensive plan for K-12 ethics and character development. (Sharp, Ryan, Delattre, Tigner, Greer, Judge Panarese)	Sharp

(continued)

EXHIBIT 3

General Priorities in Chelsea for School Year 1990-91 (continued)

17.	Concentrate on the various aspects of community affairs, for example:	
	a. Hispanic community (McLellan)	McLellan
	b. Cambodian (McLellan)	McLellan
	c. Other citizens (McLellan)	McLellan
	d. MCET (Adreani, McLellan)	Adreani
	e. Cable Television (Sharp, Goldman)	Goldman
	f. Responsibility Accountability Respect Education (RARE) (McLellan, Greer, Judge Panarese)	McLellan
	g. School Committee, Chelsea Executive Advisory Committee, Governor's Oversight Panel, et al. (Greer, Sharp)	Greer
	h. Aldermen (Greer, Sharp)	Greer
18.	Tend to any possible safety issues in the Chelsea Schools. (Clemente, Rosen)	Clemente
19.	Deal with the increasing difficulties of management associated with the involvement of more and more University personnel in the Chelsea Schools. (See attached.) (Greer, Sharp)	Greer
20.	Establish fair and dignified retirement plans for willing Chelsea participants. (Contractual) (Clemente, Towle)	Clemente
21.	Establish baseline data in order to assess our progress. (Greenhalgh) Demonstrate that there is progress.	Greenhalgh
22.	Ensure the strongest possible school system that will stand on its own when Boston University is no longer in the same position of management.	ALL

Furthermore, any implicit outcomes that can be identified in these priorities are more pragmatic and more operational than the outcomes implicit in the action plan. They also tend not to define annual measurable outcomes to the extent that the action plan did. Draft documents produced since October 1990, as well as priorities 1 and 21, do indicate, however, the intention to move toward specifying benchmarks for measuring progress.

The new priorities reflect some of the realities that became apparent during the first year, including:

- The financial setbacks, including those of the state, with which the Chelsea-BU project must grapple;
- The importance of building community rapport;
- The need to address the little problems -- for example, the lack of reliable, inexpensive transportation between BU and Chelsea -- that cause good ideas such as the tutoring program to founder; and
- The problems inherent in the exhausting additional workload that has been taken on by selected members of the BU staff.

These priorities contain broad references to the original plan, as in priority 1, which calls for a review of the fundamental assumptions and goals for the project in order to articulate new benchmarks for future assessment, and in priority 6, which refers to the 17 goals of the original plan and the original 350 page report -- although no measurable outcomes are specified for the year. The priorities also refer to many of the elements proposed in the original documents, such as the Early Childhood Learning Center, facilities development, the individual learning plans, computerization, staff development, and inclusion of parents both as parents and learners.

The behavior of complex social systems such as Chelsea is often chaotic. It is not surprising that the management team's approach has veered from the neatly structured, as the team attempts to make progress on its priorities resolving numerous unforeseen problems, large and small. Although the new priorities are less lofty than those of the original action plan, they demonstrate an intention to continue toward the original goals, as can be seen both in the achievements of the first year and in the activities planned for the second year.

Activities and Programs in the First Year of the Chelsea-BU Agreement

Many of the new programs and activities implemented in Chelsea during the 1989-90 school year can be attributed to BU's presence and role. The additional resources BU brought, both financial and professional, resulted in a number of initiatives that certainly would not have occurred if BU had not been on the scene. The new superintendent, Diana Lam, also contributed to the changed atmosphere and the effective implementation of many activities in Chelsea in 1989-90.

To assess the effects of the Chelsea-BU project on Chelsea, it is important to recognize that Chelsea was not a blank slate. Despite Chelsea's problems and shortcomings, several effective programs had been initiated before the agreement took effect. For example, several dropout prevention programs, including the Chelsea Futures program, were funded and operating prior to the agreement. Furthermore, Chelsea had several health and human service programs and a health center that were well regarded outside Chelsea. In fact, it has been suggested that BU would have created less tension and anxiety if, as it did in developing a health plan and establishing the Health Care Counseling and Coordination Center at the high school, it had recognized and built on the good programs and resources already existing in the community. Nonetheless, in several interviews, Chelsea teachers and administrators commented favorably on the availability of BU resources to support and supplement programs existing prior to the agreement.

In highlighting the key activities during the first year of the Chelsea-BU agreement, the range of programs in operation during the first year of the agreement have been included whenever appropriate in order to provide a baseline from which to evaluate both the agreement and the progress of Chelsea students in future years.

The paragraphs that follow describe a broad range of activities, including some directed toward staff, parents, and the community at large, as well as those directed toward students. The activities also include planning and administrative projects in education, as well as projects in health and human services. Many of the activities that got under way in year one of the agreement were carefully planned, while others developed quickly either because funds became available or because serious problems demanded immediate attention. There is no question that Chelsea was a busy place throughout the 1989-90 school year.

Staff-Oriented Activities

The hiring of a new superintendent and the provision of a wide range of staff development activities for teachers and administrators highlighted the 1989-90 school year in Chelsea.

Hiring a New Superintendent

Hiring Diana Lam as superintendent of schools for Chelsea was one of the boldest and most controversial decisions made by the BU management team. Lam, a 41-year-old Peruvian of both Asian and Hispanic descent, is the first Hispanic superintendent, the first woman superintendent, and the first Latino administrator ever to work in the Chelsea school system. And unlike most of the previous superintendents, Lam is not a native of Chelsea.

Under contract to Chelsea with BU supplementing her $65,000 salary by $20,000, Lam has attempted to cement the Chelsea-BU partnership. Carmella Oliver, a Chelsea parent, remarks that Ms. Lam is a "creative superintendent who is a lot more independent than [I] expected her to be. She knows this is a partnership and the rest of BU doesn't fully understand."

In August 1989, after BU bought out the contract of the old superintendent, Peter Greer invited community representatives to participate in the search for a replacement. A review committee was formed and the choice narrowed to three candidates, two of whom BU believed would be exceptionally good. Chelsea voted overwhelmingly for the third, who was the brother of a Boston union chief. (The committee reportedly believed the candidate's claim that all Chelsea needed was more money.) One Chelsea administrator said of Lam, "I didn't think she was tough enough." The management team ignored this counsel and hired Lam.

Lam had served for three years as one of four Boston zone superintendents in charge of 13,000 students in Boston's North Zone and District A, an area that includes Boston's South End, North End, Fenway, Mission Hill, Roxbury, and Allston-Brighton neighborhoods. In Brighton, she instituted a novel Early Learning Center in the Mary Lyons School. As the principal of the Manassah E. Bradley Elementary School and Mackey Mosaic Middle School, Lam worked to integrate bilingual education. Lam communicates with parents, children, and teachers in English, Spanish, and Vietnamese.

Lam accomplished much during her first year as superintendent of the Chelsea schools. BU deserves credit for recognizing her stamina, creativity, and ability to work effectively with both the university and the Chelsea community.

Staff Development

The second goal of the BU management team in operating the Chelsea schools states: "Establish programs for the professional development of school personnel and for the expansion of learning opportunities for parents." In the first year of the agreement, BU and Diana Lam inundated administrators and teachers with professional development opportunities. The professional staff in Chelsea was offered numerous workshops, institutes, lectures, field trips, minisabbaticals, and information about grants, fellowships, and scholarships. Workshops led by BU faculty covered a range of issues including multiculturism, heterogenous groupings, conflict resolution, drug education, curriculum, planning, early childhood education, intensive language instruction, the integration of special education and bilingual students into the regular classroom, and cooperative learning. BU faculty also were available to Chelsea staff for informal consultation and support.

During the first year, assessments of the school administrators were also made. These assessments were used to develop a leadership workshop attended by administrators in August 1990.

In addition to the many professional development activities, the Employee Assistance Program (EAP) at BU was adopted as part of the Chelsea Teachers' Union contract in June 1989. Prior to the agreement, employees of the Chelsea school system had no access to the types of services offered by standard EAPs. Chelsea teachers are now eligible to use the services provided by the Boston University EAP. Nonetheless, as BU is now responsible for hiring and firing Chelsea teachers, the teachers have voiced apprehension about using BU's EAP services.

Diana Lam proposed a number of opportunities to further teachers' personal and professional development as well as to voice their opinions. She began a teacher newsletter, Teachers and Teaching, to publicize classroom activities, announce events and workshops, and provide a mechanism for teachers to communicate with one another. Because of the interest in the Chelsea-BU agreement, the newsletter has a national mailing list.

Other initiatives developed by Lam include:

- The establishment of a Teacher Board which meets with Lam five times a year to discuss issues that are often assigned to committees for action. As an example, the board formed an "Improvement of Morale" committee that investigated the causes of poor morale and made concrete suggestions for improvement of communication and public relations. Forty-five teachers volunteered to serve on the Teacher Board.

- The institution of minisabbaticals recommended by the "Improvement of Morale" committee of the Teacher Board. The week-long minisabbaticals were offered to 43 preschool, kindergarten, and first grade teachers to enable them to spend a week visiting model classrooms of their choice in metropolitan Boston.

- The formation of the Neptune Fund, which provided $150 minigrants to teachers who submitted a proposal concerning professional development or curriculum materials. The $5,000 fund, later augmented by private contributions from the Chelsea-BU community, funded 50 projects for 91 teachers.

- The institution of common planning time at the Williams Middle School, the eighth and ninth grade clusters, and the Renaissance School after the schools were restructured. Teachers were able to plan interdisciplinary activities during two common planning periods a week. In addition, these teachers participated in summer institutes to plan for the implementation of the restructuring of the high school and the redefinition of the middle school clusters.

- Monthly teachers' coffees held in the superintendent's office, to enable teachers to discuss ideas with one another and with the superintendent.

This wide range of activities for Chelsea teachers and administrators throughout the 1989-90 school year was generally well received. The development of personal relationships between Chelsea and BU staff was also cited as a positive offshoot of continuous interaction throughout the first year.

Parent and Community Involvement

Several of BU's goals for the Chelsea school system focus on parents as well as the broader community. Although the lack of participation by parents in their children's education may appear to be a striking problem by middle class standards, it is not difficult to understand why Chelsea parents are not overtly involved.

Cultural, legal, and economic factors all interact to inhibit the participation of parents in the day-to-day activities of their children. For example, in the Asian cultures represented in Chelsea, particularly Cambodian, teachers are considered the intelligentsia; coming into the classroom and asking questions about their children's education would be considered disrespectful. Furthermore, many parents in Chelsea do not themselves speak English, and many are not even literate in their native language. Interacting with an educational system is thus intimidating.

Legal considerations also discourage the involvement of parents in Chelsea. It has been estimated that between 3,000 and 6,000 undocumented Latinos reside in the Chelsea community, many of whom have children in the schools. These parents maintain a very low profile and are hesitant of becoming involved with an official U.S. institution such as the schools for fear of being reported to immigration officials.

A common factor hindering participation of both the Asian and Hispanic communities in Chelsea is economics. Day-to-day financial survival leaves little time and energy for school-related programs and events.

Despite these conditions, however, BU and Diana Lam have initiated a number of efforts to get parents and the broader community actively involved in the educational system. Programs, workshops, newsletters, and celebrations for parents and the Chelsea community were all part of the 1989-90 school year.

Parent and Community Participation

The enabling legislation that gave BU the responsibility for managing the Chelsea schools required the formation of the Chelsea Executive Advisory Committee (CEAC), to consist of nine members determined by the management team and up to six additional members as recommended by the original nine members. As discussed in chapter 3, this committee had a rough first year, but the committee gave parents and other community members an official voice in school matters different from any they had in previous years.

To further encourage parents' participation, the management team allotted time at its monthly meetings for public participation. This action prompted the school committee to do the same. In addition, the meetings of both the management team and the school committee were televised on local cable TV, providing an opportunity for members of the wider Chelsea community to know what was happening in the schools.

Parents also participated on various committees. Parents concerned about health service in the schools served on the Health Committee of the management team. Participation in the traditional Parent-Teacher Associations (PTAs) had decreased as the non-English-speaking population increased, but during the 1989-90 school year, the PTAs and the Parent Advisory Committees (PACs) held regular meetings and sponsored activities.

The Parent Information Center (PIC) was also established as part of the Chelsea-BU project to increase communication with Chelsea's multilingual and immigrant populations. PIC's "Parent Guide to Chelsea Public Schools" and the "Student Assignment Guide and School Information" help keep parents abreast of current policies.

In May 1990, BU commissioned the Institute for Responsive Education -- an independent organization affiliated with BU and headed by a professor from BU's School of Education -- to conduct a needs assessment survey for the Chelsea schools. This project, known as "Tuning-in to Chelsea Parents," telephoned parents to elicit information about their perceptions of school policies and problems. Despite some controversy surrounding the overall representativeness of the sample, the results indicate that most respondents found the overall quality of the Chelsea schools to be satisfactory and expressed a willingness to be involved in the education of their children. Results from this survey led to several recommendations, including these:

- The survey results should be used to involve parents in collaborative planning.
- School-community-family planning should be coordinated to solve drug and alcohol abuse problems.
- A comprehensive program for parent involvement should be developed.
- Adult education opportunities should be expanded.

The Bank of Boston has funded a Program for Parent Involvement to implement some of these recommendations in the second year of the Chelsea-BU project.

As she did with teachers and administrators, Diana Lam reached out to parents in ways never before seen in Chelsea. She held five parent coffees at which parents shared their concerns, ideas, or just chatted informally with the superintendent. A multilingual newsletter, Voyager III, was designed and published as a "parent and community" newsletter. Cable TV regularly broadcast School Talk/Charlas en la Escuela, a bilingual program featuring Chelsea's own teachers and students. Advertisements for the Chelsea Futures tutoring program and the Read Together/Lean Juntos program also were televised. Parents and community members were asked to donate time for educational activities.

Education for Parents

Educational programs were also offered to Chelsea parents. An 18-hour workshop on substance abuse and AIDS education for parents was held over a six-week period; 27 parents completed the training. The high attendance rate was achieved partially by offering both transportation and child care stipends to participants. As a result of the workshop, the pamphlet Drug Program with Parents from Chelsea 1990, containing hotline phone numbers, was printed in English and Spanish. Some participants are now serving on substance abuse committees, speaking at parent meetings, and designing books on substance abuse prevention for day care children.

One of the most widely recognized parent educational efforts in Chelsea was the Intergenerational Literacy Program. Although begun by a member of BU's School of Education as a pilot on February 21, 1989 (before the Chelsea-BU agreement was officially adopted), this program is attributed to the Chelsea-BU project and is viewed as a success by all involved, including the director of Chelsea's other adult education program. Based on the premise that reading at home is strongly linked to children's overall literacy, this program seeks to provide parents with a wide range of literacy instruction to enrich their own lives and enable them to help their children do better in school. Parents are taught using two types of materials: those that are of personal interest to adults and those that relate to child care and child development. In addition, adults are introduced to a wide range of children's books for reading and sharing with their children. Four instructional cycles were held ranging in length from 8 to 13 weeks each. Five classes were held each week, including a class for teenage parents and an evening class. A literacy teacher, plus approximately four trained tutors fluent in the languages used by the participants conducted the classes.

The majority of the pilot year of the Intergenerational Literacy Program, funded by the State Department of Education, the U.S. Department of Education, and the Xerox Corporation, was spent establishing a foundation as well as a network of collaborators. Several community agencies contributed to the program planning, including the Bilingual Parent Advisory Council (BPAC), Chelsea Adult Basic Education (CABE), the Early Childhood Advisory Council (ECAC), and the Chelsea Department of Education.

The pilot was launched with 15 parents, 35 children, and 11 tutors participating. By September 1989 the project was fully implemented, and by the end of the 1989-90 school year 66 families were being served. Although the Intergenerational Literacy flier to recruit participants was written in four languages -- English, Spanish, Vietnamese, and Khmer -- 80 percent (53 families) of those enrolled in year 1 were Spanish-speaking. Initially, no Cambodians participated, so a special effort was made to attract these families. One family was recruited in late spring. It is hoped that their participation will encourage more Cambodians to join the program.

Participants in the first year were predominantly mothers (67 percent), although fathers, grandmothers, aunts, uncles, and teenage parents were also among those enrolled. All adults and children who completed at least one cycle were recognized at an awards ceremony.

A number of research activities are under way to determine the effectiveness of the Intergenerational Literacy Program.

- Pre- and post-test measures of literacy proficiency are being administered to all participants.
- Changes in linguistic complexity in the journals kept by participants are being analyzed.
- Data for case studies of seven preschool children are being collected.
- Achievement test data for participants' children in grades 1-3 are being reviewed.

Results from these activities will help measure the success of the Intergenerational Literacy Program.

Activities Directed Toward the Chelsea Community

In addition to activities aimed toward the parents of Chelsea students, a number of projects were directed toward the wider Chelsea community:

- On February 27, 1990, in observance of African-American history month, a celebration was held. Dean Hubert Jones of BU's School of Social Work gave a talk on the family and community as sources of support for the children.
- On March 29, 1990 about 650 members of the Chelsea community gathered in the Chelsea High School auditorium to celebrate Latin American Week. President Piedad Robertson of Bunker Hill Community College spoke, and 24 students received leadership certificates.
- BU's Department of Modern Foreign Languages and Literature provided intensive language instruction not only to Chelsea faculty and tutors but also to several police officers at the police department's request.

In addition to these activities, President Silber also appointed a community liaison representative, Vincent McLellan, to bridge the cultural gap between BU and Chelsea's Hispanic and Cambodian residents. The objectives are to build awareness of and support for the Chelsea-BU agreement and its activities within the community and to identify community-based needs, as defined by Chelsea residents.

The community liaison representative has concentrated on small projects with Hispanic community leaders, such as obtaining computers for the early childhood programs in Chelsea; supporting summer youth programs in Chelsea; identifying job training and employment opportunities for Chelsea residents who are underemployed because of language, not skill barriers; and securing funds for community sponsored celebrations and events. The main point of contact has been Centro Hispano, a service organization in Chelsea whose board includes many of the city's Hispanic leaders.

BU's main contact with the smaller Southeast Asian population has been through a Chelsea-based group called Cambodian Community of Massachusetts (CCM). BU has provided the group with technical assistance for writing proposals, free space for fundraisers, and BU student volunteers to teach citizenship classes; CCM, in turn, has provided translators for BU programs and activities.

Health and Human Services Activities

Chelsea educators have long attempted to deal with the serious personal and social needs of Chelsea's students, as well as their educational deficiencies. Hence many human service programs antedate the agreement with BU. The key Chelsea-sponsored programs and activities during the 1989-90 school year are briefly summarized here:

- Child abuse and neglect. The Chelsea Public Schools won a grant from the Digital Corporation for a Personal Safety Program to target every K-3 student starting in 1990-91.

- Suicide intervention. A suicide policy and suicide assessment teams have been developed for each school. The teams, consisting of an administrator, school nurse, crisis intervention or guidance counselor, school psychologist, and referring teacher or school employee were trained in suicide lethality, referral, and crisis intervention by a consultant from the North Suffolk Mental Health Center.

- Pregnant teens and teenage parents. The crisis intervention counselor at Chelsea High School handled a variety of case management, counseling, and referrals for in-school teenagers, as well as referrals. Reaching Out to Chelsea Adolescents (ROCA) provided services to teenagers who had either left school or needed alternative community services. The Choice Thru Education Program enabled young mothers to work for and receive their high school diplomas.

- Health education programs. Teachers received training in health education. Also, ROCA sponsored a health safety contest and a workshop with guest speakers from Massachusetts General Hospital, ROCA, and the Diabetes Foundation.

- Substance abuse programs. In addition to the parent workshop on substance abuse and AIDS mentioned earlier, the following activities took place:
  - The Chelsea Substance Abuse Committee -- consisting of school administrators, counselors, teachers, clergy, parents, local officials, police, students, and representatives from health and mental health agencies -- met four times to plan and implement programs.
  - Through the Drug Abuse Resistance Education (DARE) project, in its third year of operation, two uniformed officers from the Suffolk County sheriff's office taught a 17-week curriculum to 300 sixth graders at Williams Middle School.
  - Bilingual substance abuse counselors from the Chelsea Substance Abuse Clinic provided individual and group education, and counseling to more than 150 children through the Youth Intervention Program.

BU supplemented many of the ongoing Chelsea human service activities and developed some new programs as well. BU's School of Social Work began a course titled "Alcoholism: Identification and Early Intervention." Funded by BU and outside foundations, the 28 hour, three credit graduate course helped 14 teachers, counselors, and administrators identify and assist children at risk for substance abuse. The program was coordinated by Terry Lane, assistant dean of the School of Social Work, and Denise Hurley, and taught by Maryann Amodeo, director of BU's Alcohol and Drug Institute. Maria Albadalejo Meyer, a mental health clinician, helped teach several of the sessions. At the same time BU held a 15-hour companion course for staff members of human service agencies in Chelsea. Participants who completed the course were awarded 15 continuing education credits in social work. The last session of both courses brought the two groups together to explore mechanisms for improving referrals between the agencies and the schools. Case consultations were available to both groups in March and April 1990.

With an eye toward the 1990-91 school year, BU and the city of Chelsea jointly applied for a grant under the Drug-Free Schools and Communities program to train 15 teachers, counselors, and school personnel to be drug education specialists.

The BU School of Social Work has been involved in the Chelsea-BU agreement from the beginning, promoting a range of social work functions within the school system. During the first year of the agreement, Dean Hubert Jones and Assistant Dean Terry Lane worked with Denise Hurley, Director of Human Services to the Chelsea Public Schools, to develop and implement programs in Chelsea. Lane is a member of the Health Committee of the BU management team and the Mental Health Task Force of the Health Committee. Chelsea and BU's School of Social Work designed and implemented a three-year demonstration project of social work services for the Chelsea Public School System. In the planning stages from March to August 1990, the demonstration project includes the field placement of a full-time senior-level social worker and a unit of M.S.W. candidates.

The Health Plan

One of the major accomplishments of the first year of the Chelsea-BU project was the development of a comprehensive health plan. As part of that plan, the Health Care, Counseling, and Coordinating Center (CCC), currently called the Teen Health Center, became operational at the high school at the beginning of the 1990-91 school year.

Chelsea initially expressed concern that its own excellent resources might be ignored. But Bob Master, chair of the Health Service Department of BU's School of Public Health, worked closely with the Chelsea community, particularly Roger Sweet, director of the highly regarded Chelsea Memorial Health Center, run by the Massachusetts General Hospital (MGH), in 1989-90. Dr. Master not only has substantive expertise and good connections with state health officials, but he also has good rapport with members of the Chelsea community. Early on, a 15-member Health Committee, including people from Chelsea, was formed. No step was taken, even by BU, without the review and approval of the committee.

The Health Committee created a landmark health service design for Chelsea, called "A Blueprint for Health." This plan has two main components: (1) on-site centers for the high school, grades 5-7, and day care centers; and (2) creation of a health service development corporation called "Health Moves."

The health plan specifies different CCC goals for children of different ages. The high school CCC has been designed to address specific needs of high school students such as preventing unwanted teenage pregnancy, substance abuse, and sexually transmitted disease, as well as other diseases. It will immediately evaluate the health status of new immigrant students and provide "prompt diagnosis, treatment, and systematic follow-up of chronic health problems." In addition, it will provide various health education programs for students, parents, teachers, and staff. For younger children the stated goals of the health plan are to obtain parent involvement in their children's health care, conduct ongoing health assessments, and provide individualized health plans. The centers are also expected to coordinate referrals and follow-up with the numerous health-related programs in Chelsea.

By working with the Massachusetts Department of Health and other state government officials, the Chelsea-BU health team was able to obtain regulatory waivers from the state that recognize "Health Centers Without Walls" as legitimate satellites of licensed health care centers. As a result, payments from Medicaid and Healthy Start can be used to fund most CCC operations. This approach may serve as an important model for getting needed health care to children in many low-income areas (particularly urban) where a high proportion of children qualify for Medicaid.

The Health and Human Services Council, the successor to the Health Committee, was also established during the fall of 1990 to plan, develop, and obtain necessary funds for the CCCs. The formation of this council represents the first step in achieving the objectives of "Health Moves" to insure a responsive and dynamic relationship with the Chelsea community. The Health and Human Services Council will consist of parents, bilingual/bicultural health and human services workers, and professionals from Chelsea and BU. It is staffed by Stacy Swain, the current administrator of BU's school of Public Health's Health Services Department.

The health plan established the following goals:

- To decrease the dropout rate among teenage parents by 33 percent by 1994;
- To decrease school absenteeism by 33 percent by 1994;

- To decrease the teen pregnancy rate by 50 percent by 1995;
- To decrease drug use and violence and the accompanying rates of disability and death by 33 percent by 1995;
- To improve the nutritional status of infants and children as measured by growth standards, and educational achievements; and
- To increase educational performance substantially as measured by reductions in dropouts, improved performance on standardized tests, and increased percentages of students going on to a university education.

The "Blueprint for Health" was planned, developed, and implemented during the 1989-90 school year. From 75 to 80 percent of the costs will be recovered from Medicaid payments for services. Realizing budget constraints, BU applied for $130,000 of the $3 million Peabody grant contributed to MGH in order to provide seed money to implement the high school CCC.

The health plan is an example of the Chelsea-BU project at its best. BU recognized, respected, and built on an existing asset of the Chelsea community, creating a team that drew from BU and Chelsea, developing a good plan, and implementing activities necessary to overcome legislative and financial barriers.

Restructuring of Schools

During the first year of the agreement, Diana Lam took quick action, with the support of BU, to remedy some potentially serious problems by clustering the middle school, clustering the eighth graders within the high school, and planning for a total reorganization of the high school.

Clustering in the Middle School

Breaking away from the traditional junior high school model, the Williams Middle School restructured itself into a number of clusters or small schools. The impetus behind this change was the physical removal of the eighth grade to the high school building. The first year of clustering at the middle school was done without any training or related staff development; subsequently, the change was not well accepted by teachers. The purpose of the clustering was to eliminate student labelling and "to compel teachers to instruct children and not simply teach subjects." Another purpose of the clustering was to expose children to fewer adults.

Initially, the clusters did not focus on heterogeneous grouping of students. Rather, one sixth grade and one seventh grade cluster targeted a homogenous sample of high achievers. The remaining clusters (approximately six) were heterogenous.

During the first year of middle school clustering, Williams Middle School experimented with two-, three-, and four-teacher clusters who were responsible for approximately 50, 75, and 100 students, respectively. Specialists saw students in six-day cycles.

A consultant was hired to address teacher dissatisfaction with clustering the summer after the first year. The Williams Middle School headmaster handpicked a cluster evaluation team which represented specialists (i.e., physical education, arts, special education, bilingual) who met with the consultant to hammer out details of what clustering should entail. Results were greater teacher acceptance of clustering and changes in the structure of the clusters. (During the second year, all of the clusters focused on the heterogeneous groupings of students and specialists saw students for a full quarter each day.)

Eighth-Grade Clustering

At the beginning of the 1989-90 school year, for space rather than philosophical reasons, eighth graders were moved into the high school.

On January 1990, the 234 eighth-grade students were "clustered" on the second floor of Chelsea High School and divided into two groups. Each group had its own team of teachers to cover the basic academic subjects (English, math, science, social studies, and bilingual), as well as ancillary teachers (physical education, art, reading, music, nutrition, woodworking, languages) who served both groups.

The midyear change also had the follow features:

- Core teachers and bilingual teachers gained common planning time.
- Monthly "full cluster" meetings with students, parents, Chelsea Futures staff, and an ancillary teacher enabled all members to participate in the management of the Cluster program.
- On-site telephones were installed to improve access to parents.

Further clustering in the high school, including both the eighth and ninth grades, got under way in the 1990-91 school year.

Reorganization of Chelsea High School

Although Chelsea High School did not completely reorganize until the second year of the Chelsea-BU agreement, planning began in the 1989-90 school year. In addition to clustering both the eighth and ninth grades, by fall of 1990 the high school was divided into three additional schools within schools, each of which is designed to foster closer working relationships between students and teachers and to make the high school experience more personal:

- The Renaissance School serves 160 students in grades 10, 11, and 12. This program would borrow features of the Sizer and Cologne, Germany models which takes the approach that students are workers and teachers are coaches. Teachers stay with the same students for three years exploring ways to develop strong school/family ties. Interdisciplinary work is at the core of this approach.
- The Traditional School serves 400 students in grades 10, 11, and 12.
- The Voyager Academy provides a highly individualized educational program to meet the needs of 40 to 45 over-age students. Like the Community Learning Center in Cambridge, this program would include students with special needs and bilingual students as well as regular education students.

Dropout Prevention/At-Risk Programs

Chelsea students have one of the highest dropout rates in Massachusetts. Less than half of all students in the ninth grade at Chelsea High School are expected to graduate. Academic failure that forces students to repeat grades is one of the main reason students drop out, although many other factors also contribute to Chelsea's unusually high dropout rate. These include pregnancy and a sense of alienation from the schools.

In the second marking period of the 1989-90 school year, 490 students at Chelsea High School failed two or more courses -- approximately 45 percent of all students in grades 8-12. Recognizing that these students were at risk of dropping out or repeating the year, Superintendent Lam proposed to the university management team in March 1990 two short-term interventions: pairing each of the students with a volunteer adult "coach" and offering intensive, accelerated High Expectation Learning Program (HELP) courses after school, during school vacation, and on Saturdays. She also proposed a restructuring of the high school, described previously.

As part of the Positive Life Program Coaching program, every Chelsea public school employee was asked to volunteer to coach one to three of the 490 students who were most at risk during the spring of 1990. The role of the coach was to take a personal interest in the student and to encourage the student to attend school regularly. Each coach was expected to meet with his or her students at least twice between March and June and to make a phone call or write an encouraging note to the student each week. The Chelsea Futures director, Linda Alioto-Robinson, served as the project manager.

The High Expectations Learning Program (HELP) was a series of accelerated and intensive 30-hour courses offered outside normal school hours for up to 2.5 credits. Teachers (for a stipend), administrators, and BU staff were invited to "teach what you love to teach" by designing accelerated, experientially based English, history, science, and math courses; the maximum class size was 12 students.

HELP started in the spring of 1990. According to the project director, Ron Toleos, 64 of the 90 students who enrolled in the program earned full or partial credit. Sixty percent of the students receiving credit had previously failed a course in that discipline; the remainder had elected to take HELP courses for enrichment. Toleos notes that three Chelsea High School seniors would not have graduated without the HELP courses.

The initial success of HELP prompted the superintendent to propose that the program be offered again during the summer. Following the ninth grade cluster planning institute at the end of June, students were solicited to enroll in HELP courses as part of a ninth grade trial placement contract. A total of 87 students attended the summer HELP courses held between July 9 and August 9, and all but 6 earned some credit. Approximately 55 of the students receiving credit signed up for summer HELP because they had failed a particular subject or subjects in the course of the school year. According to Chelsea High School's guidance director, Peter Steritti, approximately 15 to 20 students were promoted to the next grade as a result of the summer HELP.

The Chelsea-BU project initiated an additional tutoring program. Boston University Tutoring Program (BUTP), directed by Anthony Baxter of the BU School of Education, was designed to provide supervised tutoring as part of a long-term plan to develop an individual learning plan for every student. The original intention of the BUTP was to enlist 500 BU students, staff, and alumni to tutor Chelsea students each semester; volunteers from the Chelsea community were to be incorporated gradually. Implementation fell far short of the plans. Recruitment was minimal; only 12 students enrolled in the course first semester, and fewer than 20 students participated second semester. Students received credits for tutoring, as well as $800 forgiveness on student loans. Some tutors proved to be unreliable because they had transportation difficulties (it takes 45 minutes to get to Chelsea from BU by public transportation), carried heavy course loads, and lacked supervision. The Chelsea school system complained that there were not enough tutors, that they were not coordinated, and that the undependable tutors were detrimental to the children. BU hopes to provide a bus shuttle service between BU and Chelsea as part of its plan to expand the tutoring program in year two.

In addition to the efforts instituted by the Chelsea-BU project under Superintendent Lam's direction, Chelsea maintained additional dropout prevention programs. One of the key dropout prevention efforts in Chelsea, the Chelsea Futures program, was originally funded by the McConnell-Clark Foundation and the state of Massachusetts. Funds from this program were used to get the restructuring of the high school underway as well as the clustering of the eighth grade.

Another aspect of the Chelsea Futures Program relies heavily on case managers to assess students and to design individual plans for them. In addition, the case managers monitor the students, encouraging them to participate in the programs developed for them. The Chelsea Futures program also has an early identification system that tags students at risk of dropping out of school through preidentified markers. Using a computerized data base, case managers assess students with three or more identifiers. Dwindling funds, however, have resulted in the loss of three out of the four case managers.

Tutoring is considered another key element of the Futures program. Alioto-Robinson hoped to tap into the tutoring program developed by BU, but found BU students to be generally unreliable. Because tutoring was in place prior to BU's arrival, she was able to rely on already identified local sources for recruiting tutors.

Other community initiated tutoring efforts in Chelsea included an after-school tutoring program at the Prattville Elementary school titled "Homework Helper," a program for at-risk high school students through the Choice Thru Education program and tutoring to tenants of the Chelsea Housing Authority through their tenant support services.

Early Childhood Programs

Early childhood education is central to the plans of the Chelsea-BU agreement. Diana Lam herself is an early childhood specialist. She, along with many others involved in the collaboration, including John Silber, firmly believe that a solid early learning experience serves as a good foundation for the learning experiences throughout an individual's life. Their long-term goal is to provide "three years of preschool for every child and day care for any child that requires it."

The proposed Comprehensive Childhood Educational Program would have infant-toddler care for children from birth to age three and preschool and kindergarten for children ages three, four, and five. The program would also reform education in grades 1 through 5. In addition, it was proposed that the programs for both preschool children and students in grades 1 through 5 operate until the end of the parents' working day and on days when school is normally closed.

Much of the early childhood focus in the first year of the Chelsea-BU project centered around planning and preparation activities. Personnel were hired, programs for Year 2 were planned, and proposals for outside funding were written. Irma Napoleon, an early childhood specialist with more than 25 years of experience, was hired in October 1989 to fill the new position of early childhood coordinator.

Central to the planning and preparation activities during the first year of the agreement were mini-sabbaticals which provided the opportunity for all preschool, kindergarten, and first grade teachers to observe neighboring classrooms and developmentally appropriate programs and to work directly with these teachers. Also, weekly workshops were held every Wednesday on issues related to developmentally appropriate curricula.

A five-day Early Childhood Institute was held in June 1990 on providing developmentally appropriate education for primary and early elementary students. Classroom organization for independent learning and materials that challenge different developmental school levels were included as topics at this institute.

All Early Learning Center (ELC) classes will include children with special needs and bilingual children. Located within the ELC will be five full-day integrated kindergarten classes. Two of the classes will be composed of six special education children and 19 regular education children, staffed by two full-time teachers. Two other classes will be two-way bilingual, with all children learning two languages. These two classes will serve 50 children, half of whom speak Spanish and half English. Each of the two-way bilingual classrooms will be staffed by one teacher and one paraprofessional. The fifth class will serve 15 kindergarten children, seven special education students, and eight regular education children. This class also will have one teacher and one paraprofessional.

The preschool class at the ELC will be divided into two half-day bilingual classes. Each class will serve 15 students, seven special education and eight other; each of these classes will be taught by one teacher and one paraprofessional. All ELC staff will attend weekly staff meetings, weekly workshops, and monthly meetings with the entire early childhood staff, including first-, second-, and third-grade teachers.

Other early childhood programs will also be based at the ELC. In the Chelsea Home Instructor Program (CHIP), which is designed to increase parent involvement, four paraprofessionals will go into the homes of four-year-old children and provide families with educational enrichment tips. This program will begin by serving families on the waiting list for Head Start.

The ELC opened in October 1990, and is located on the first floor of Our Lady of Grace School. ELC will serve 140 to 145 children for the full school day, 8:15 a.m. to 2:15 p.m. Beginning in November 1991 the ELC will be open from 7:30 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. BU is paying for the extended day program, which will be free to parents until June 1991. Plans also exist to operate the ELC year-round to better serve the needs of Chelsea parents.

The High Technology Home Learning Centers is another early childhood program that will operate in Chelsea. Funded completely by IBM, the program provides training to family day care providers as well as a computer, printer, modem, and a dedicated telephone line. The computers allow family day care providers to communicate with the BU School of Education, as well as with other preschool programs in Chelsea, the Chelsea schools, other day care providers, and the Chelsea Health Center.

Development of Curriculum Objectives

The first of the 17 goals that guide the BU management team is to: "revitalize the curriculum of the city's school system." The 1989-90 school year was designed as a year in which planning for the curriculum changes would take place. Curriculum objectives were to be implemented in the second year of the project in grades K through 8. Carole Greenes, associate dean for research, development, and advanced academic programs in BU's School of Education and a member of the management team, and a committee of eight curriculum experts began meeting in February 1990 to develop curriculum objectives for grades K through 8. Committee members were: Lee Indrisano and Jeanne Paratore (reading and language arts); Bob Kilbourn and Terry Kwan (science); Suzanne Chapin (mathematics); and Steve Ellenwood and Karen Waldstein (social studies). Except for Terry Kwan and Karen Waldstein, who were hired as consultants, committee members were also faculty at BU. (Terry Kwan, is now a temporary lecturer at BU.)

The purpose of the first meeting was to plan the process for developing the objectives. The superintendent was invited to attend and to bring any Chelsea staff members whom she wanted to be involved in the process. Although the superintendent did not attend, she sent her assistant and the Curriculum Coordinator. It was decided at this meeting, based on recommendations from the Chelsea staff participants, that the BU staff would draft the objectives, and the objectives would then be reviewed by several focus groups of Chelsea teachers, under the coordination of a Chelsea staff member.

The first draft of the objectives was sent to the coordinating member of the Chelsea staff, Janis Rennie, Elementary Curriculum Coordinator in Chelsea. On June 1, 1990 she then met with groups of teachers at the elementary schools to review the objectives. Comments from these meetings were summarized and sent to BU. Several teachers involved in the reviewing process expressed resentment because of the lack of collaboration between Chelsea and BU in the development of the objectives, and the superintendent indicated that she would have preferred more teacher involvement in the process from the beginning. However, two points must be remembered. First, the process was recommended by the superintendent's representatives at the initial meeting to plan the process. Second, during June, teachers were not working beyond the normal school hours because they were involved in a work-to-rule job action as part of a labor dispute. This union action placed a significant constraint on the number of teachers who could participate in the review process within the given timeframe.

The second draft of the curriculum objectives was disseminated to the Chelsea school system on July 31, 1990. Comments on the document were due to Boston University by August 9, 1990, in preparation for a workshop that BU planned in order to complete development of the curriculum objectives. However, the Chelsea school system did not have the resources to disseminate this draft to teachers, and BU received no comments.

The extent to which the relative lack of teacher participation in curriculum planning was caused by problems on Chelsea's part in implementing the teacher review process, or by BU's compressed time schedule is unclear. Carole Greenes, the BU faculty member with primary responsibility for the development of these objectives appears to have been substantially involved in fund-raising as well. The development of curriculum objectives did not begin until February, 1990 and barely made the June and August deadlines. On the other hand, the Chelsea coordinator may not have had the review process sufficiently organized to ensure that timely reviews occurred despite the press of end-of-the-year responsibilities and the need to contact reviewers once the school year ended.

Plans for selecting teachers to participate in the workshops also did not proceed as originally planned. Initially the intent was to train the "best" teachers to serve as mentors to others in their schools. This selection did not occur. The Chelsea's school administration had selected the dates for the workshop in the spring, and BU had provided information about the workshop that the school system was to disseminate to teachers at the beginning of June; their inability to have the best teachers participate is surprising since it has been suggested that the efforts to target "mentors" was derailed because of negotiations over teacher contracts and last-minute efforts to develop the objectives. In an effort to recruit at least 30 participants, BU opened its curriculum workshops to all teachers. In the end, 28 teachers attended.

The two-week workshops were held August 12-24, 1990, at BU's School of Education. The participants, who received a stipend, did not actually spend the time "developing" curriculum, but instead discussed instructional and assessment strategies, watched a software demonstration, and participated in a two-hour interdisciplinary presentation. The teachers suggested some changes to the structure of the document (which was the second draft), but the content remained essentially untouched.

Despite the initial resentment among teachers for not being included in the development of the objectives, the workshops were favorably received. Workshop participants worked closely with BU faculty and consultants, developing a rapport that set the tone for continuing cooperation on the objectives. The faculty participants were also scheduled to spend one day a week in the schools in the fall and two days in the spring of 1990-91 to support the implementation of the curriculum objectives. Evaluations after the workshop indicated that teachers accepted the objectives and supported their implementation.

Planning for New School Facilities

Chelsea's schools are outdated and in desperate need of repair and revitalization. The newest school building in Chelsea was built in 1909 and one school dates back to the Spanish-American War. Furthermore, Chelsea is the only city in Massachusetts that has never used state funds to build new schools. It thus follows that a preeminent goal for the Chelsea-BU project is to "seek to expand and modernize physical facilities in the school system."

Chelsea has a long history of studying ways to revitalize its facilities, but it has never acted on these studies. In 1954, a study by Harvard University recommended a new high school, major improvements to the existing high school and Williams Middle School, and the replacement of both Prattville and Burke elementary schools with several small primary schools. The total cost for these improvements in 1954, was estimated at $4.4 million. Several other studies of facilities have been requested since the 1954 Harvard review; all concur that Chelsea desperately needs new facilities. A 1986 report estimates the cost of replacing and renovating Chelsea schools to be almost $37 million. A report released by Boston University on October 20, 1987, states:

> As was true in 1954 and every year since that time, Chelsea is in desperate need of improved facilities. There is no available space for pre-school or day care programs, and the space currently used for early childhood programs is inadequate. In every school, there is a woeful lack of recreational and physical education space. "Closet" classrooms, hallways, and other ad hoc approaches to expanding space inhibit effective teaching. Alternative classroom settings that promote creativity and innovative learning are stymied. Necessary services such as counseling and guidance, health and nutrition, community programs, and other social services cannot be provided. Poor design of office space contributes to ineffective administration and leadership, especially at the Williams School. Lack of sufficient cafeteria space is particularly demoralizing to both students and teachers. . . . In sum, the configuration of these turn-of-the-century buildings severely constrains the learning process. One vivid example is sufficient: many classes at Shurtleff take 20 minutes or more to go through the school's only lavatory at least twice a day.

In addition to having outmoded facilities, Chelsea is experiencing growth in enrollment because of increases in the numbers of births and immigrants.

A draft of the Chelsea educational and community campus plan recommends construction of a new high school and two pre-K through 8 schools, and the renovation of one elementary school. Projected cost for the four schools is $92 million. The facilities will include permanent space for senior citizens, literacy and job training programs for parents and other adults, recreational facilities for youth, preschool space for three- and four-year olds, and extended day care programs for children ages 3 through 13. The schools truly will become community centers that are open year round.

The ability to build and renovate schools in Chelsea is, of course, highly dependent on funding. To qualify for state funds, school districts must develop minority balance plans that are accepted by the state board of education. Chelsea has recently developed such a plan. The Chelsea School Committee approved this desegregation plan in April 1989 and the State Department of Education approved it in December 1989. The goal of the plan is to accomplish a "balance" of minority and nonminority students in all elementary schools within a range of 10 percent of the percentages that represent their enrollment in the school system as a whole.

According to the minority balance plan, parents will be able to choose the school they wish their child to attend with no guarantee that they will receive their first choice (controlled choice). Home address will no longer determine the school assignment and each school will develop a magnet theme (e.g., the Early Learning Center).

During the first year of the Chelsea-BU project, plans were made to implement the minority balance plan through registration at a Parent Information Center. Kathy Satut was appointed equity coordinator. A handbook, titled "Student Assignment Guide and School Information," was prepared in multiple languages to explain the minority balance plan and to provide information on each school. A parent advisory council was formed to aid in the implementation process.

With this plan approved and in operation, the State of Massachusetts has authorized 95 percent of the cost of construction. However, the current fiscal crisis in Massachusetts and in Chelsea once again threatens the construction of new schools in Chelsea.

Computerization

There is no question that the Chelsea Public Schools could benefit from computer resources for administrative (recordkeeping) functions and educational purposes. School systems across the country have recognized the widespread benefits of computers; Chelsea, however, lags behind much of the nation in the computerization of its records and the use of computers in the curriculum.

In May 1989, the Princeton Center for Education Services completed a study of the technology needs of the Chelsea Public School System. The study, funded by the William C. Norris Institute, presented an inventory of the computer hardware and software systems that Chelsea already possessed and made specific recommendations for additional purchases and use of existing resources. The technology plan was presented to BU and Chelsea for review. In January 1990, specific plans for the addition of computers for both administrative and educational uses were released as part of the technology implementation plan for Chelsea.

During the first year of the Chelsea-BU agreement, BU raised $800,000 to be used for computer hardware and software in all six Chelsea schools. This money came from the Hayden Foundation ($102,000 for computer labs); Chapter 2 ($75,000); the Peabody Foundation ($200,000); TRW; Jostens (software); and an anonymous donor. The IBM Corporation established a 5-year lease to buy programs.

Despite BU's ability to raise a considerable amount of money for computers and software, there is disappointment among teachers and administrators about the slow pace of the computerization of records and the unavailability of computers for classroom use in the first year of the Chelsea-BU project. It is unclear how it was determined where computers would be placed, for what purposes they would be used, and whether resources were set aside for training Chelsea teachers and administrators. And when computers were installed for specific applications, it is not clear that Chelsea staff understood exactly what the computers could and could not do, particularly regarding the computerization of student records.

Administrative Uses

When Diana Lam became superintendent, there were no computers in the central offices, and the high school was contracting the management of its student data to NCS. BU immediately computerized the central offices with five Macintosh SE computers. Chelsea High School received an IBM AS400 plus a number of IBM PS/2's to computerize attendance, grade reporting, scheduling, and financial matters. Each of the remaining middle and elementary schools was scheduled to receive an administrative computer, but did not.

Educational Uses

The technology implementation plan suggested that approximately 25 computers (Apple II GS or IBM PS/2) for instructional use be located at each school either in a networked lab or in classrooms. The first computers installed were for the special education program. The high school received an IBM laboratory with 25 computers and a systems analyst.

At the Shurtleff Elementary School, 30 computers were installed in a writing lab and two P.C.s were placed on each floor to be rotated among classrooms. Teachers were required to go to the writing lab in order to improve their own computer literacy, and many have now become skilled at using computers.

Jostens' Computer Corporation donated computer software to the Chelsea Public Schools. Jostens' representative presented a seminar on "Using Technology to Teach Writing" and demonstrated the company's software at the summer curriculum development workshop.

Financial Issues

Financial Management

BU's initial study of the Chelsea schools prior to the Chelsea-BU agreement identified a number of financial management and control problems in the district, including separate financial reporting and control systems in the city administration and the school department, overly complex and duplicative charts of accounts, an accounting system that did not meet the district's budgeting and recording needs, and a lack of automation in the financial management system. The report recommended the creation of a single, integrated accounting and reporting system for the city and school system that would support the district's budget needs and enable the system to monitor its spending and allocation of resources.

BU's management team established as one of its goals for the 1989-90 school year the development and implementation of a system to improve the district's financial management. This goal had the following components: redefinition of the district's chart of accounts to improve the utility of financial data for budgeting and long-range planning, improvement of the district's payroll operations, and computerization of budget and financial data to meet the district's budgeting and reporting requirements.

During this first year, BU initiated several efforts to improve Chelsea's financial management system. BU staff established new accounting and reporting procedures for university-raised funds and conducted an audit of Chelsea's state and federal funds. The district's school budget was computerized, making it easier for district staff to adjust budget allocations and monitor spending. Computers were purchased by BU for use by the district's administrative staff, and consultants were made available to help staff use the software packages.

Although BU made some progress in implementing a new financial management system in Chelsea during the first year, the system was not fully operational by the end of the year, for a number of reasons:

1. BU tried to implement a student record system and a financial management system in Chelsea simultaneously. With limited staff resources in the district, this effort was beyond the capacity of Chelsea's support system. A decision was made early in the first year to concentrate efforts on the student record system, which district staff viewed as a higher priority than the financial management system.

2. Staff resistance often slows changes in the way things are done. BU administrators charged with implementing the system attributed the Chelsea's staff resistance to an environment in which leadership was absent. In BU's judgment, Chelsea administrators were not used to making decisions and changing old habits. Chelsea staff, however, indicate that they did not fully understand why the changes in the financial management system were being made and they felt that they still had to get their regular work done while the new system was being installed.

Communication between BU and Chelsea staff must further improve before the financial management system is implemented. Chelsea staff needs to understand the system and actively participate in the implmentation of it to use it effectively. The participation must be identified as a priority of the superintendent who must reinforce the importance of the change to those who will be using the new system.

Increasing Financial Resources

In addition to improving the financial management system during the first year, BU aimed to broaden Chelsea's base of financial support. These efforts were directed towards three funding sources: independent foundations and corporations, the city of Chelsea, and state and federal agencies. These efforts met with mixed success.

Grants, Pledges, and Donations

During its first year, BU established a target of $3 million in grants from corporations, foundations, and outside government agencies to supplement the operating budget. Fund-raising efforts generated nearly $2.2 million, including $1.7 million in donations and pledges from corporations and foundations and an additional $462,000 in federal and other grants. Most of these grants were restricted in their use -- for example, for the purchase of computers -- and could not be used at the general discretion of the management team.

BU's Office of Financial Affairs prepares monthly reports on gifts and pledges received as well as pending and funded grants. Appendix E details cash gifts and pledges for the Chelsea project as of October 31, 1990; Appendix F details grants funded and pending as of the same date. These documents show the following:

- BU had received a total of $1,059,427 in gifts and $425,199 in grants.
- Gifts ranged from $10,000 to $250,000, grants from $12,709 to $106,829. All but one grant came from the state and federal governments.
- Most of the larger gifts are restricted in their use (e.g., for computers, early childhood education projects, parent involvement projects, curriculum and development) while most of the small ones are not.
- Only one gift ($100,000 from Warren Alpert) is a challenge donation, contingent on BU's receiving an equal amount from nine other individuals.
- Most gifts came from local sources.

Fundraising efforts may have been hampered by a number of factors, including John Silber's absence from BU during his campaign for govenor of Massachusetts. Silber's absence at the beginning of the Chelsea project may have given funders pause about BU's long-term commitment to Chelsea and led them to withhold support until such a commitment was assured. Also, the initial lack of support in the Chelsea community for the BU takeover which was reinforced by publicity in the local media, may have caused funders to hold back their financial support from the project, at least until there was greater community support for the takeover.

As part of this study, we contacted seven prospective donors that had been asked to contribute funds to projects under the Chelsea-BU agreement. The three organizations that contributed were:

1. Massport: $100,000 total ($20,000 in year one) for a new child care center in Chelsea.
2. Raytheon: $250,000 total ($50,000 in year one) in unrestricted funds.
3. Millipore Foundation: $125,000 total ($60,000 in year one) for a high school computer lab.

Massport, which operates Logan Airport in Boston, has had a long-standing policy to donate funds to communities, including Chelsea, located near the airport. Massport decided to help fund new early childhood initiatives in Chelsea in response to an appeal by BU and a request made by Chelsea's representative in the state assembly, Richard Voke.

Raytheon is a major high tech electronics manufacturing firm headquartered in Lexington, Massachusetts, outside Boston. Its corporate giving program traditionally funds education, higher education, and United Way-sponsored programs in eastern New England. Raytheon seeks to improve the quality of mathematics and science programs as well as equality of opportunity, particularly for female, minority, and disabled students. Initially approached by John Silber before legislative approval of the agreement to fund math and science initiatives for Chelsea, Raytheon eventually decided instead to provide an unrestricted gift to enable BU to respond to unanticipated needs.

Millipore, like Raytheon, is a Fortune 500 company that has established a corporate foundation. Located in Bedford, Massachusetts, Millipore manufactures microporous filters and equipment used by hospitals, in pharmaceuticals, and in microelectronics. The Millipore Foundation gives grants to education, research, and hospitals. The program officer was looking for ways to fund important education programs and therefore initiated contact with BU about what was needed in Chelsea. Millipore's decision to fund the computer lab was based on BU's request, substantiated by Superintendent Lam, and the corporation's own strong interest in mathematics and science.

At the time of our interview, another foundation, A.C. Ratshesky Foundation in Brookline, was considering a request from BU for $5,000 to help fund the Intergenerational Literacy Program. The Ratchesky Foundation gives small grants -- approximately $2,000 each -- to fund social welfare projects in the Greater Boston area. In the past Ratshesky has funded BU projects from the School of Social Work as well as music scholarships for BU students.

In each of these cases, several factors contributed to BU's successful efforts to secure external funds for Chelsea:

1. The donors were located in or near the Boston metropolitan area and thus had a direct interest in, as well as a history of, supporting projects in the greater community.
2. The donors were knowledgeable about Boston University, John Silber, and developments leading up to the Chelsea-BU agreement, as well as the socioeconomic and educational needs of Chelsea.
3. They viewed the Chelsea-BU agreement as a significant effort to address such problems comprehensively -- an effort that might (at least in the mind of one of the funders) also serve as a national model.
4. Where the donors chose to earmark their contributions for specific purposes, BU's requests for support matched their corporate funding profiles.

Three organizations declined to fund projects requested by BU for Chelsea: James B. Cox Charitable Trust in Maine; the Ford Foundation in New York City; and the Rockefeller Foundation in New York City.

Representatives of these organizations agreed to talk with us as long as we did not attribute specific reasons to them in their decisions not to fund BU's proposals for Chelsea. In some cases, the organizations declined all comment about the reasons, choosing instead to discuss the factors they generally looked for in recommending funding proposals to their boards. We have aggregated the information to come up with a general listing containing characteristics of the projects that they would be more inclined to fund. These were:

- Evidence of local leadership and community commitment to the institutions that are the object of the funding request. The funders cited as evidence of community commitment whether local leaders enroll their own children in the public schools. (In Chelsea, the chairman of CEAC, the Chelsea mayor, and the only two school committee members with school-age children all send their children to private schools.)
- Evidence of community involvement in defining needs and designing projects to address those needs. Many of the larger community foundations, in particular, have "equity" agendas, giving greater value to projects that enable people and their communities to have more involvement with and control of the systems that affect their lives. (In requesting funds for Chelsea, BU representatives made most of the presentations themselves. In one case, when the donor called community leaders to verify support for a particular request, community leaders were unaware of the proposal.)
- Indications of whether the community has the capacity to sustain the changes prompted by a particular project. The donors look at the long-term economic strength and leadership of communities to determine whether they can continue to support new programs and provide a permanent foundation for expanding such

initiatives. (Thus the lack of local effort in funding Chelsea's schools not only yields too few funds for education but also works against efforts to raise external funds, which are only temporary.)

- Matching the donor's general areas of interest and expanding them in new and significant ways. The prospective donors did not view the comprehensive approach to education reform that formed the base of the Chelsea-BU agreement as unique. They claimed to be funding similar programs across the country. What makes Chelsea unique is management of the Chelsea Public Schools by BU, the "top down" approach to reform, which these donors were not inclined to support. (Many community foundations prefer to support a "bottom-up" approach.)

- The potential for replication. The donors had serious doubts about whether a Chelsea-BU type of agreement could or would even be attempted elsewhere. Although they thought that university-school district collaborations would probably increase (and were supportive of such efforts), they did not foresee that other universities would contemplate or attempt to take responsibility for running an entire school system.

- Availability of existing funds and competition among proposals. This last reason had less to do with the Chelsea-BU agreement *per se* than with the reality donors face of finite funding and commitment to other projects.

The city of Chelsea spends only about 17 percent of its local tax dollars on its schools -- the lowest percentage of any city or town in Massachusetts. Because this share is so low, BU recognized the need to work closely with the mayor, the aldermen, Chelsea's business community, and the school committee to increase the city's own support of its public schools.

State and Local Funds

BU's efforts to increase the local share of funding have been directed to two areas: (1) increasing the school's share of existing local taxes; and (2) raising tax revenues through an override of the limitations of Proposition 2-1/2, the tax limitation measure passed in 1980. For two main reasons efforts in both areas have been relatively unsuccessful thus far:

1. Chelsea has long been a poor community, but the district's fiscal condition has been especially weak during the past few years. It is generally more difficult to expand education's share of taxes when the fiscal pie is stable or shrinking, because increases for education can be achieved only through cuts in other areas. Budget problems in the first year, in fact, resulted in a cut of $667,000 in the school's budget.

   Chelsea nearly lost $1.8 million in state equal educational opportunity (EEO) grants in its fiscal year 1990 budget, because the city was unable to meet the maintenance-of-effort requirements without "devastating" the fire and police departments. Chelsea received $1.4 million from a state appropriation of $20 million for distressed communities. Schools in Chelsea received $833,000 of this emergency fund.

2. There is political resistance in Chelsea to shifting resources into education from the police and fire departments and to raising taxes generally. In a city with a high crime rate and drug activity, many voters favor spending to maintain a strong police force. Moreover, most of the politicians who run Chelsea do not have children in the public schools; thus they have little incentive to cut funding for public safety services and increase funding for the schools.

Despite these obstacles to increased funding, BU proposed a school budget for fiscal year 1991 that would raise the schools' share of local tax revenue to about 34 percent. This represents a significant increase, but is still below the share in most other cities in the state. Prospects for attaining that level do not appear strong in the short term, however, in light of the weak economy in Massachusetts and the large deficits facing the state government. BU may well need to rethink its funding strategy, if it is to achieve its long-term educational goals for Chelsea.

In discussing long-term funding of the Chelsea-BU agreement, Dean Greer estimated that between $30 million and $40 million would have to be raised over the duration of the agreement. In accomplishing this goal, however, Greer expressed the view that the biggest challenge would come not from raising gifts and grants but from increasing local funding of the schools -- expanding Chelsea's local tax effort for education as well as stimulating the local economy.

If the most compelling reason that local political and community leaders supported giving up control of the public schools to BU was their hope of receiving more money for education (rather than altering the management of and results produced by the school system, which is BU's major objective), the challenge for BU is to provide adequate funding to justify the agreement. To the extent that BU is unable to provide such funds -- either through gifts and grants or by increasing local tax revenues for education -- local support for the agreement (as well as BU's long-term commitment to Chelsea) may be jeopardized.

Plans for Year 2 of the Chelsea-BU Project

As new programs were being implemented in the first year of the Chelsea-BU agreement, planning for several other activities that would begin in later years was under way. Several programmatic changes plus new programs were targeted to begin in the 1990-91 school year (the second year of the ten-year agreement):

- Implementation of the curriculum objectives;
- Implementation of the Health Care, Counseling, and Coordination Center at the high school;
- Full-day kindergarten programs in all Chelsea elementary schools and the Early Learning Center;
- Extended hours (7:30 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.) at the Early Learning Center beginning in November 1990;

- Restructuring of Chelsea High School into three schools:
  - the traditional school,
  - the Renaissance School, and
  - the Voyager Academy;

- Implementation of the minority balance plan, which would give parents the option to choose the elementary school they wish their children to attend and facilitate obtaining state funds for building new facilities;

- Opening of the Parent Information Center;

- Continuation of the Intergenerational Literacy Program;

- Further staff development activities, to include:
  - scholarships to BU to take graduate courses;
  - an increase in common planning time for teachers at Williams Middle School, the 8th- and 9th-grade clusters at Chelsea High School, and the Renaissance School;
  - the continued availability of Neptune Fund money; and
  - "Rings of Saturn" grants to teachers sponsored by the Bank of Boston;

- Creation of an Office of Grant Development;

- Further installation of computers for educational and administrative uses;

- Integration of bilingual students and children with special needs into regular classrooms from preschool programs to the high school;

- Negotiation of an administrator's contract;

- Renovated health facilities in Chelsea High School in early 1991;

- An affiliation with Bunker Hill Community College, which will involve:
  - using qualified Bunker Hill students as mentors for college-bound Chelsea students;
  - professional development and networking for Chelsea teachers and guidance counselors about educational and vocational programs offered at Bunker Hill;
  - "distance learning" classroom via satellite;
  - apprenticeship and externship programs involving work site training in the fields of business, services, high technology and biogenetics, and allied health fields;
  - Advanced Placement courses for talented and gifted Chelsea High School students at Bunker Hill; and
  - development of faculty exchange programs and special professional development workshops; and

- Simplification and expansion of BU's tutoring program.

The success of these second-year initiatives will depend on a number of factors, not the least of which is the sustained commitment of the BU management team and Diana Lam. Many of the Chelsea staff interviewed for this report indicated that they would consider leaving if Lam left her position. It is now known that Lam applied for the post of superintendent of schools in Boston early in the second year. Although she was not selected for the position, her application raised questions about her long-term commitment to Chelsea.

Of course, funding is also central to the success of the Chelsea-BU project. Massachusetts's budget crunch will curtail educational funds available to Chelsea. The recession may limit money from private foundations as well as Chelsea's ability to provide the matching funds required of some programs.

CHAPTER 5

PROFILE OF STUDENT DATA

Introduction

Chapters 3 and 4 of this report document the many new programs BU implemented in the first year of the Chelsea-BU agreement, as well as BU's plans for expanding and extending their efforts in year two. However, the most sophisticated educational programs and the infusion of additional financial and professional resources into Chelsea will not necessarily be recognized unless the students themselves show substantial educational gains. BU's involvement in Chelsea will ultimately be judged by BU's ability to make measurable improvements in four problem areas:

1. Poor daily attendance;
2. High dropout and truancy rates;
3. Low test scores; and
4. Low rates of postsecondary enrollment among high school graduates.

Of course, these four problem areas are interrelated and improvements in one area are likely to be accompanied by improvements in the other areas.

Obtaining measures of change in these problem areas may not be difficult. Although student records in Chelsea were not computerized prior to the Chelsea-BU agreement, data on Chelsea students are available from several different sources. Reports required for state and federally funded programs, for example, yield aggregate data on daily attendance and enrollments, as well as dropouts. In addition, results from standardized tests taken by Chelsea students are available.

But many underlying problems also need to be measured. Poor daily attendance can be caused by health problems. Thus it is important to gather data that can measure changes not only in the readily identified educational problem (e.g., attendance or postsecondary enrollment rates) but also in the success of the programs designed to address the underlying causes of the problem (e.g., the health clinic).

This chapter presents some of the data currently available in Chelsea and briefly discusses what data are needed to conduct a long-term evaluation of BU's involvement in the Chelsea schools.

Available Data

Aggregate data on the four main problem areas just identified -- attendance, dropouts, test scores, and postsecondary plans of high school graduates -- can be gleaned from internal reports and documents provided by the Chelsea schools. These statistics are important because they provide baseline data from which to measure the effects of the many changes initiated by BU and

Diana Lam. This section presents data for the 1988-89 school year, in order to show the condition of education in Chelsea immediately prior to the Chelsea-BU agreement.

Attendance and Enrollment Data

As part of the Chapter 188[1] reporting requirements, each school district in Massachusetts must complete an Individual School Report at the end of each academic year. This report contains information on average daily attendance, average daily membership, retentions, exclusions, suspensions, and dropouts and truants.

Exhibit 4 presents the average daily attendance and membership figures for each of the six schools in Chelsea for 1988-89. As these data show, the average rate of absenteeism increases considerably from the elementary schools to the middle school to the high school. Although there is some variation across the four elementary schools, the absenteeism rate averages less than 10 percent in each school. At the middle school absenteeism averages 14 percent. At the high school the rate approaches 20 percent. (In fact, on some days the rate exceeds 25 percent.) Once all data are computerized, Chelsea may wish to examine attendance data across years to determine whether there is a pattern regarding high absenteeism and to identify and address the underlying causes for such a pattern.

These aggregate rates do not reveal the extremely high degree of transiency among Chelsea students. Students enter, withdraw from school, and often reenter school in Chelsea at much higher rates than they do in other school districts. Thus even though the total numbers of students enrolled may not seem to fluctuate greatly across the year, the number of different students enrolled can be extremely high. Any long-term evaluation of the Chelsea-BU project must examine the effects of this phenomenon on outcome measures.

Dropout and Truancy Rates

Dropout data also are available from the Chapter 188 reports. For these reports, schools are required to define dropping out as "the voluntary act of a student age 16 or older leaving school prior to graduation for reasons other than death or transfer to another school." (Students under 16 who drop out are considered truants.) The definition of a dropout is important to any long-term evaluation of Chelsea, because a change in definition might result in vastly different statistics.

Exhibit 5 presents the total number of Chelsea students who dropped out of school during the 1988-89 school year by grade level, race, and sex. Not surprisingly, students are more likely to drop out in the ninth and tenth grades than they are in the eleventh or twelfth grades. Dividing the total number of dropouts (143) by the average daily membership at Chelsea High School (782) indicates a dropout rate of approximately 18 percent. However, because the transiency of Chelsea students is not accounted for in the data reported to the state, this rate may be artificially inflated. Nonetheless, the number of dropouts is indeed high, and the media attention to the dropout problem is understandable.

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[1] Chapter 188, An Act Improving the Public Schools of the Commonwealth, was signed into law in July 1985 to establish a statewide testing program that began in the following year.

EXHIBIT 4

Average Daily Attendance and Membership for the Chelsea Public Schools, 1988-89

	Average Daily Attendance[a]	Average Daily Membership[b]	Rate of Absenteeism[c]
SCHOOLS			
Elementary			
Mary C. Burke	243.6	268.2	9.2%
Prattville	259.0	270.3	4.2
Shurtleff	880.8	963.9	8.6
Williams	611.2	666.2	8.3
Middle School			
Williams	435.2	508.2	14.4
High School			
Chelsea High	640.9	782.4	18.1

[a] Average daily attendance is computed by the schools by "dividing the aggregate present by the number of days in session."

[b] Average daily membership is computed by "dividing the aggregate membership by the number of days in session."

[c] The rate of absenteeism is not reported by the schools to the state on the Chapter 188 form. The rate was calculated by dividing the average daily attendance by the average daily membership and subtracting the result from 100 percent.

EXHIBIT 5

Number of Students Dropping Out of School In Chelsea By Race, Sex, and Grade, 1988-89

	Grade and Sex							
	9		10		11		12	
RACE	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
American Indian	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0
Black	0	0	3	0	0	1	0	0
Asian	4	1	3	0	2	1	3	0
Hispanic	23	16	9	14	4	5	3	3
White (non-Hispanic)	2	14	9	9	4	2	4	3
TOTAL	29	31	24	23	11	9	10	6

Test Scores

The performance of Chelsea students on a variety of standardized tests is available. Chelsea students in all grades take the California Test of Basic Skills every year. In addition, under Chapter 188, students in the third, sixth, and ninth grades in all Massachusetts schools take tests measuring basic skills in reading, mathematics, and writing. As part of this same legislation, students in grades four, eight, and twelve are tested every other year in reading, mathematics, science, and social studies as part of the Massachusetts Educational Assessment Program. Furthermore, a small group of high school juniors and seniors take the Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) and a much larger group of students (130 in 1989-90) generally take the Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery (ASVAB). Thus, there are several types of data that can be used as a baseline against which to measure the success of the Chelsea-BU agreement in improving the test scores of students in Chelsea.

Presented in Exhibit 6 are results from the October 1989 Massachusetts Basic Skills Testing program. These data show that in all grades and in all three skill areas, Chelsea students score well below the average for other students in Massachusetts. Furthermore, the gap between Chelsea students and other students in the state widens considerably from the lower to higher grades. In the third grade, for example, 64 percent of all students in Chelsea passed all three basic skills tests compared with 88 percent of students statewide. In the sixth grade, only 54 percent of Chelsea students passed all three tests compared with 84 percent of students statewide. By ninth grade, only 42 percent of Chelsea students passed the reading, mathematics, and writing tests, compared with 82 percent of students statewide. It is important to take into consideration the fact that in the higher grades a significant number of students, particularly those from the Prattville school attendance area, leave the Chelsea schools to attend private schools.

Also useful are results from the California Test of Basic Skills. As presented in Exhibit 7, the percentiles for reading, language, mathematics, and the total battery provide an opportunity to compare Chelsea students in grades 1 through 8 with a national sample. Generally speaking, the performance of Chelsea students in all grades and in all test areas falls below that of a majority of students taking the test. Indeed, in only two instances do Chelsea students score above the 50th percentile -- in total language for sixth graders (the 51st percentile) and in total math for second graders (the 63rd percentile).

Finally, results from SAT tests taken by 38 college-bound seniors in 1989 round out the general picture of poor performance by Chelsea students on standardized tests. The mean verbal score was 295 and the mean math score was 369 (on a scale that begins at 200 and goes up to 800). Monitoring the test scores of Chelsea students on several different standardized tests over time will provide a useful barometer to the progress of Chelsea students under the Chelsea-BU agreement.

Postgraduation Plans of High School Seniors

What Chelsea students do after they graduate from high school is another indicator of their success in school. Included in the Chapter 188 reporting are the postsecondary plans of students graduating from Chelsea High School in 1988-89. Exhibit 8 shows that only 21 percent of all Chelsea High School graduates attended a four-year college immediately after graduation;

EXHIBIT 6

Percent of Students Passing the Massachusetts Basic Skills Tests in Chelsea and the State, October 1989

GRADE	CONTENT AREA	PERCENT PASSING in CHELSEA	in STATE
3	Reading	74	94
	Mathematics	81	94
	Writing	82	93
	All three tests	64	88
6	Reading	62	88
	Mathematics	71	92
	Writing	88	95
	All three tests	54	84
9	Reading	54	87
	Mathematics	53	88
	Writing	68	93
	All three tests	42	82

EXHIBIT 7

Percentile Scores of Chelsea Students on the California Test of Basic Skills, May 1989

GRADE	TOTAL READING	TOTAL LANGUAGE	TOTAL MATH	TOTAL BATTERY
1	45	NA	48	NA
2	45	42	63	47
3	40	36	45	41
4	41	45	48	43
5	38	36	38	36
6	49	51	49	50
7	47	47	47	48
8	45	42	35	41

EXHIBIT 8

Percent of Chelsea High School Graduates With Various Postsecondary Plans, 1988-89

Attend two-year college	27%
Attend four-year college	21
Attend other postsecondary institution	5
Work	27
Military	5
Other	15
	100%

another 27 percent attended a two-year college. If the large numbers of students who drop out of school before their senior year were included in these figures, the percentages going on to college would be considerably smaller. Increasing the attendance of Chelsea students at four-year colleges is explicitly stated as a goal of the agreement; monitoring these data over time will directly measure the success of BU in reaching this goal.

Long-Term Data Needs

Central to the evaluation of the success of the many programs implemented by BU, as well as the Chelsea-BU agreement overall, is reliable and accessible information on Chelsea students and the special programs in which they participate. Aggregate data like those just presented can, if collected regularly, measure changes in several key areas. But these aggregate data do not provide opportunities for linking student participation in special programs to particular outcomes. Nor do they allow for the monitoring of potential changes in educational outcomes that may reflect changes in the composition of the student body rather than program effects themselves. Good student-level data are thus critical for determining whether students in Chelsea are benefiting from BU's involvement.

Good data, though, are important far beyond the interests of evaluating the Chelsea-BU project. The complexity of school systems today, regardless of their size, mandates the availability of accurate and up-to-date information for management needs. As an example, students participate in a number of different programs, many of which can overlap in goals and targeted populations. When determining how to allocate resources among students, teachers and administrators must know who takes part in what programs. Deciding the success or failure of different programs also requires information on participation, as well as on the characteristics of those students participating.

As already noted, limited computerization of student records had begun in Chelsea prior to the 1989-90 school year. BU raised $800,000 for both the computerization of student records and the use of computers for administrative needs. Computerization was also designated as one of BU's ten areas of concentration to be focused on between January 1990 and June 1991.

Data are needed in Chelsea to measure changes in the four main areas generally considered essential to the success of the Chelsea-BU agreement, as well as the effects of participation in the new programs initiated by BU and potential changes in the composition of students. Useful data would include information about the students themselves, such as their age, family background, grade in school; daily enrollment and attendance data; performance data that would include course grades as well as standardized test scores and postsecondary outcomes; and a wide range of behavioral data on suspensions and expulsions, health, and the participation of students in different programs. Exhibit 9 specifies data elements that would be valuable both to the evaluation of BU's involvement in Chelsea and to the day-to-day management of the Chelsea schools.

All data on Chelsea students should be maintained over time so that individual student educational histories can be obtained. The longitudinal development of students can be followed if each student is given an identification number that remains constant throughout that student's

EXHIBIT 9

Student Data Elements for Evaluation and Management

STUDENT CHARACTERISTICS

- Student identification number
- Date of birth
- Gender
- Ethnicity
- Parents or guardians' names, address(es), and telephone numbers
- Family background, including:
  - Parents' education
  - Parents' ethnicity
  - Parents' marital status
  - AFDC participation
  - Eligibility for free lunch
- Siblings in Chelsea schools
- Current grade
- Current school
- Teacher (for elementary school students)
- Class schedule (for high school students)
- Date entered school in Chelsea
- Date of graduation
- Pass/fail status at end of year
- School(s) prior to Chelsea

ENROLLMENT/ATTENDANCE DATA

- Daily attendance
- Dropout and truancy status, including dates
- Withdrawal date and reason

PERFORMANCE DATA

- Report card information
- Standardized test scores
- SAT and ACT scores
- GED
- Postsecondary attendance
  - Where applied
  - Where attended
  - Financial aid received
- Employment after graduation

(continued)

EXHIBIT 9

Student Data Elements for Evaluation and Management (continued)

BEHAVIORAL DATA

- Suspension/expulsion information:
  - Date
  - Reason
  - Type
- Health information
  - Visits to health center
    - Date
    - Problem
    - Care received
    - Referral, if appropriate
    - Recommended future care
  - Substance abuse
    - Type
    - Date
    - Referral, if appropriate
  - Pregnancy
    - Date
    - Care received
    - Birth date of child
    - Father of child
- Participation in special programs and activities (including dates):
  - Chapter 1
  - Summer school (HELP)
  - Early Childhood Education program
  - After-school care
  - Special education
  - Bilingual education
  - Tutoring
  - Chelsea Futures
  - Substance Abuse Prevention
  - Extracurricular activities
  - Parent participation in Intergenerational Literacy program

educational career in Chelsea. Earlier data should not be deleted whenever a student's status on any one factor changes. A longitudinal evaluation must be able to account for changes in a student's status over time, movement across schools and in and out of the system, and all of the different programs in which a student participates.

These data elements would provide the opportunity to measure BU's success in responding to a number of problems in Chelsea. Participation in specific programs also could be linked to changes in outcomes. From a school management perspective, these same data elements would allow teachers and administrators to determine whether students are attending school on a given day, how parents or guardians can be contacted, what programs students are currently participating in, what programs have already been used to assist the student, and what special problems a student may have.

The computerization of student records that began in Chelsea in the first year of the Chelsea-BU agreement appears to address both evaluation and management needs. In the summer between the 1989-90 and 1990-91 school years, BU hired an outside consulting firm, Reugeon and Johnson, to computerize basic information about all Chelsea students. BU is currently working with the Chelsea schools to expand this system and to develop reports needed by Chelsea administrators.

CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSIONS

The Chelsea-BU project is a particularly unique example of educational reform. Never before has a private university completely managed the day-to-day operation of a public school system. Furthermore, the comprehensiveness and complexity of the overall reform effort place this venture in a class by itself. Thus, it is easy to understand why the Chelsea-BU project has attracted the nationwide attention of educational practitioners, policy makers, and the general public.

In our efforts to understand the implementation of this project, we turned to the educational reform literature. Several overriding issues in the first year of this project raised key questions that we hoped would be addressed by this body of work. For example, is the conflict that pervaded the relationship between BU and Chelsea inevitable in such a massive reform effort? If so, is there a stage at which such conflict must be resolved before true change occurs? Does the "top down" approach which BU has taken in managing Chelsea achieve more effective and long range results than a "bottom-up" approach which works more collaboratively with teachers, parents, and community members?

Our initial review of the reform literature did not reveal answers to any of these questions. Nor did our discussions of these issues with several prominent educational theorists help to place the events in Chelsea in a more general theoretical framework. In fact, we were strongly advised not to impose any single theoretical perspective to our research at this point, and we have followed that advice. As a ten-year project, the Chelsea-BU effort may itself become the best mechanism for answering the broader questions which we raise.

This report is thus written as a descriptive case study of the first year of the Chelsea-BU project. As such, it describes the governance of the project as well as the many specific activities which got underway. We end this report by summarizing what we view to be the major accomplishments of this effort as well as the problems which arose in the first year.

Achievements

Administrative and Physical Capacity

The Chelsea-BU project has strengthened Chelsea's administrative and physical capacity in several ways:

1. The BU management team hired an energetic and creative superintendent, Diana Lam, who has proved able to bridge the gap between BU and Chelsea. She has provided well structured goals and strategies that could serve as the basis for accountable measures of progress. In addition, she is working with BU to develop

the skills of the Chelsea school personnel and to implement personnel performance measures.

2. The project has installed a computerized system to manage all student records and fiscal data. The project has developed a facilities plan that, if funded, will enable the schools to have the physical capacity needed to support the new reforms.

Academic Climate

Progress toward an improved academic climate has been attempted by extending teacher involvement beyond their own classrooms and into the school as a whole, improving teacher skills, restructuring the high school to provide schools within a school to serve diverse student needs, clustering the middle school to provide integrated educational services, providing adult mentors for students at the high school, and establishing a program of intensive afterschool and weekend teaching (HELP).

Early Childhood

The Chelsea-BU project has implemented two activities to improve early childhood education. First, an early childhood coordinator was hired to work with BU and Chelsea staff on plans for the Early Learning Center, which opened in the autumn of 1990. This center, serving preschool and kindergarten students, is a model of the preventive, integrated educational services espoused by John Silber and BU. The center will integrate services for special education students into regular classrooms, and provide two-way bilingual education to both English and non-English speaking children. The center will also offer extended day care. The project also implemented a program to instruct family day care providers and to provide them with ongoing technical assistance by using telecommunications.

Health Care

The establishment of the Health Care, Counseling, and Coordination Center at the high school in the fall of 1990 is one element in what is a multifaceted effort to tackle problems that impede academic success. If the center is successful and self-sustaining, it will serve as a model for addressing the health care needs of children in other communities and for establishing constructive working relationships between communities and outside organizations. The project also provided dental care to some students at Chelsea.

Curriculum Development

The Chelsea-BU project was successful in developing curriculum objectives for the school system, which has previously had no clear direction. The objectives are to be implemented during the second year of the project, in grades K through 5. If accepted and adhered to by the teachers, these objectives can be used to assess academic progress and to develop individual learning plans.

Problems

The Chelsea-BU project encountered two significant types of problems in its first year: financial problems and problems of rapport between the two entities.

Finance

Raising funds for the various components of the project and dealing with the problems endemic to such a limited school budget required substantial time and energy on the part of the management team. Fundraising got off to a slow start but by the end of the year the Chelsea-BU project was only $800,000 short of its goal of $3 million. Although this is an enormous amount that could determine whether big-ticket items such as the individual learning plans can be implemented, it represents only a 27 percent shortfall.

It is not uncommon for funding organizations, even those that support innovative activities, to be somewhat cautious in awarding funds because they want assurance that they are not throwing their money away, even on a good idea. They look for evidence of commitment, planning, and preparation to know that once they provide their funds, the idea is likely to be successfully implemented. If BU can establish sufficient rapport with the Chelsea community to convince foundations that the Chelsea-BU project is a stable, successful, collaborative effort, there may be a snowball effect in obtaining funds. Of course, in an economic downturn, competition for funds may increase.

Although fewer dollars could delay or even stop the implementation of some activities, for the moment at least the project as a whole is still on track. In fact, many inexpensive activities have been started that could encourage greater commitment on the part of the teachers, parents, and community, to the idea of improving the schools. This commitment could expand the pool of human resources that could be drawn upon from Chelsea and, in turn, encourage support from outside foundations.

Perhaps more dire is the economic outlook for the Chelsea School funds that must come from state and local government sources. The Chelsea-BU project was rocked from the beginning with teacher negotiations and pending teacher strikes that stemmed from the extremely limited funds that were available from Chelsea. As indicated by Dean Greer, the funds that are raised by grants cannot supplant the fiscal responsibilities that rightfully belong to Chelsea and the state of Massachusetts.

Establishing Working Rapport

As is evident throughout this report, the most serious problem that the Chelsea-BU project encountered during the first year of the agreement was the friction between BU and various groups within Chelsea. The BU management team seems to be working hard to resolve these tensions, but the team's desire to move ahead quickly on the goals they perceive as obvious is still encountering resistance in Chelsea.

Perceptual Differences

Much public attention has focused on the conflict that preceded the Chelsea-BU agreement and on the efforts to overcome the after effects of that conflict. Nothing illustrates the perceptual differences more starkly than this exchange between BU President John Silber and AFT President Al Shanker on Ted Koppel's Nightline on December 1, 1988:

> SILBER: What I have told the school committee of Chelsea is that we're going to take something from you. We're going to take your right to engage in political patronage. There will be no more patronage in Chelsea. But we're going to give you something else, and that is the opportunity to be the public servants in the highest tradition, and you're going to have the opportunity of improving the schools of Chelsea and improving the lives of those children in Chelsea.
>
> SHANKER: I think it's a good proposal. And I think the one problem with it is that it's coming from outside, top down, which is contrary to every modern principle of management which says if you want something to work from the beginning, you start by involving all the people who are going to have to make it work.

During an interview for this study, then-gubernatorial candidate Silber called the agreement a model for both programs and governance. On the program side, he emphasized the need for a preventive approach -- early childhood education and home-school linkages, rather than remedial action. On the governance side, Silber portrayed BU's intervention into Chelsea as a precursor to recapturing local control of a school district that school officials had allowed to become dysfunctional. He believed that the Chelsea School Committee had subordinated its representation of educational and community interests to its exercise of political patronage and a willingness to represent union interests at the expense of children, teachers, and parents.

BU's first priority was to make changes to produce a functioning school system. Obtaining broad-based input into the decisions often took a back seat to moving quickly ahead. In contrast, critics of the agreement demanded that BU be held accountable not only for the new programs that BU representatives are implementing but also for the way in which they go about implementing them.

The exchange between Shanker and Silber on Nightline also attests to the importance of perceptions in defining and shaping reality. Perceptions are important, as descriptors of important events that have already taken place and as predictors of actions that could well determine the fate of all the plans and programs, irrespective of their effect or intent.

Cultural Differences

In understanding the Chelsea-BU agreement, it is also important to acknowledge the cultural differences between a university and a local community, differences that extend beyond the styles and perceptions of their leaders. Chelsea is separated from BU by size and outlook, decision making styles, and politics.

Size and outlook. Chelsea is small and, despite being a virtual melting pot, parochial. Finite boundaries have made it insular. Although in clear view of Boston, Chelsea could as easily be located hundreds of miles away, given the lack of identification on the part of Chelsea residents with the larger city. Even with all its problems, however, Chelsea is a proud community that values tradition and personal contacts.

In contrast, BU is located in the heart of Boston and identifies strongly with the city. The institution is cosmopolitan in outlook and, through education programs offered in other countries, is eager to expand its international reputation. With more than 26,500 students and university employees, BU is larger than Chelsea and through an aggressive economic development policy continues to expand its borders. Administrators pride themselves on being innovators, willing to take risks and invest in new enterprises.

Decision making styles. Chelsea's political leaders are accustomed to articulating the seemingly insurmountable barriers to solving their problems and tend to look to outsiders for help. But Chelsea's minority community activists demand that the people in power in Chelsea address those problems. In both cases, participants tend to emphasize the process; they want their say at the table when efforts are being made to come up with solutions -- whether it is the ability to grant favors (elected officials) or to protect particular community interests (community activists.) Moreover, one's claim to sit at the table in Chelsea is determined less by position, authority, or accountability than by one's willingness to speak up.

Universities, in contrast, tend to focus on solutions. Faculty are not rewarded for identifying needs but only for winning support for action from their colleagues and marshaling the resources (by obtaining outside consultants, attracting research grants, etc.) to address the needs. A person's ability to sit at the table relates to position and is usually contingent on being appointed by the dean or president. Participants are held accountable for delivering results. Moreover, particularly at private institutions, decisions do not have to be made in, or to become, public. Universities place far more value on achieving results than on adhering to process (committee meetings, although frequent, are usually to be avoided at all costs) or collaborative decision making. Nowhere is this situation more apparent than at BU, where its forceful president, with his authoritarian management style, has come to embody the institution.

Politics. It has been said that all politics is local. Given the nature of politics as practiced in Massachusetts, that adage was probably coined there. (And if it wasn't, it should have been.) With the possible exception of the Boston Red Sox, Celtics, and Bruins, no other topic of conversation is so popular, be it in the halls of government, on street corners, or in cabs and neighborhood restaurants.

Bay State citizens also practice a particular brand of politics. Whereas in other communities being part of government may be regarded as performing a public service, in Massachusetts, it is commonly viewed as claiming one's birthright. Political name dropping is not considered offensive but simply a way of establishing one's credibility. Political office, and the allegiances and conflicts associated with holding office, may be handed down within the same families from one generation to the next. And as with other cherished contact sports, everyone involved in Massachusetts politics knows how to keep score, and does.

Moreover, the true measure of one's value -- particularly in small jurisdictions like Chelsea, where everyone seems to know everyone else -- is a willingness not only to work in the community but also to live there. Hence it is widely accepted that Chelsea jobs should go to Chelsea residents, particularly Chelsea natives. It closely follows that contacts can be the most successful career track for landing a job in government, including positions within the school system. Recent arrivals to Chelsea, particularly Hispanics and Asians, have not been the beneficiaries of this system, and they have no stake in perpetuating it.

Contrast the political culture of Chelsea to the decision making style of a university, where careers are made through credentialing, demonstrated success in one's field, and the recognition of one's colleagues. Hence, professional competency and expertise, rather than patronage, are generally perceived as the prerequisites for securing a position in higher education.

Of course, when it comes to institutional prestige, some universities are more equal than others, but what you know remains more important than whom you know. Thus, the professional reputation of a candidate for a job is usually based on his or her accomplishments, rather than on the place where they occurred.

Interestingly, some Chelsea residents view the management team members and newly hired Chelsea administrators who knew one another in prior professional lives as the beneficiaries of "BU patronage." And what Chelsea and BU shared politically is the influence of dominant leaders -- President Silber at BU and the late Andrew Quigley in Chelsea.

Consensus

Despite the perceptual and cultural differences that frame the Chelsea-BU agreement, the stakeholders agree on several key points:

- The critical nature of Chelsea's educational and socioeconomic needs and the inadequacy of internal resources to address these needs.
- Support for BU's comprehensive approach to improving education in Chelsea, which links the school with the home and focuses on all levels, prekindergarten to adult.
- Recognition of Superintendent Lam's effectiveness. Many observers consider Lam's selection to be superintendent as BU's single most important contribution in Chelsea to date -- not only because she is bilingual and shares a Hispanic heritage with the majority of Chelsea's students, but because she has worked tirelessly with students, teachers, and parents to improve the Chelsea schools.
- Acknowledgement of the management team's good faith efforts to operate openly and to be accessible, allaying initial fears that BU would make all decisions behind closed doors.

These areas of consensus provide a common ground for addressing the remaining concerns about the agreement, which have focused, at least to date, almost exclusively on process issues.

Process

Any time that roles change, process issues become important in figuring out how the players will relate to each other in new ways. This is especially true when the changes are both structurally significant and controversial, as is the case of the Chelsea-BU agreement.

The initial process concern in Chelsea reflected the major conflict that had surfaced during enactment of the agreement: the fear that the public's business would not be conducted in public or subject to the safeguards normally imposed on government bodies. As noted earlier, concern about this issue -- and about not having access to the key decision makers -- has diminished. Clearly, members of the management team and Superintendent Lam make themselves available to parents, teachers, and minority community leaders. In fact they are more accessible, some argue, than the school committee.

What remains is the need to resolve some fundamental process issues -- the relations among the management team, CEAC, the Chelsea School Committee, and parent groups -- as Dean Greer acknowledged in his 1989-90 annual progress report. Differences continue to exist among these entities over the ways in which BU should implement change, interact with other stakeholders, and take into account the opinions of others in the decision making process. These concerns can best be expressed by assessing two types of interactions: (1) the relationships among the management team, Superintendent Lam, and the Chelsea School Committee and (2) the broader relationship between BU and the Chelsea community. Issues regarding the interaction between BU and the school personnel cannot be discussed until the study of teachers during the second year of the Chelsea-BU project has been completed.

The BU Management Team, Superintendent Lam, and the Chelsea School Committee

The Chelsea-BU agreement differs markedly from the traditional model of local educational governance, in which a lay school board represents the community and establishes/oversees district policy and the superintendent exercises leadership by raising key issues for board consideration, implementing board policy, and managing the district.

Two factors in particular make Chelsea and BU unique: (1) the presence, in essence, of two school boards (the Chelsea School Committee and the BU management team) and (2) the management team's unique composition (educators and administrators appointed by President Silber for their expertise). Three management team members are former local superintendents; others are curriculum experts in language arts, mathematics, and bilingual education. Such collective expertise is rarely, if ever, found on local school boards, whose members are generally elected by voters to represent differing community perspectives.

At this stage, this unique blending of educational and administrative expertise on the "school board" in Chelsea may not be problematic, for several reasons:

1. There is plenty of work to go around. All parties have their hands full simply in taking action on so many fronts at once (making key personnel changes, upgrading the curriculum, training principals in assessment, etc.). Therefore, no one is wrestling with maintaining the normal distinction between policy making (board) vs. administrative (superintendent) boundaries.

2. The central office staff is small (unlike other districts with many curriculum specialists) and therefore unable to offer intensive instructional support to Chelsea's administrators and teachers, which is being provided instead by BU faculty.

3. Although both the management team and Superintendent Lam are actively pursuing academic improvements in the Chelsea schools, they have established an informal division of labor. BU faculty concentrates more on developing the substance of programs (and obtaining funds to implement them) while the superintendent is more focused on setting up processes and structures that improve teaching and learning and on establishing stronger ties between the school and the parents and teachers.

There are signs, however, that the management team and the superintendent may need to coordinate their initiatives more closely and their roles may need to be more carefully delineated. For example, as noted earlier, two separate annual progress reports for Chelsea listing priorities and accomplishments have been issued, one by the management team and one by Superintendent Lam. Chelsea residents could probably understand new activities and track progress better if there were a single, integrated report. Similarly, in "the typical" school district, external offers of assistance are usually coordinated with, if not approved by, the superintendent's office. The management team and Superintendent Lam seem to communicate closely regarding BU's planned activities. Maintaining a good working relationship with the superintendent will require the superintendents' prerogative to oversee that new programs be maintained, especially as increasing numbers of initiatives are proposed.

In contrast to the positive relationship between the management team and the superintendent, interaction between the school committee and the management team has been problematic. Although the school committee invited BU into Chelsea and approved the agreement, it frequently acts more like an adversary than an ally. During the past year, for example, the school committee requested numerous reports on the amount of external funds raised by BU for Chelsea, particularly the proportion that supports BU's administrative overhead, on the assumption that BU is making a profit. Even school committee members who support the agreement have publicly questioned Superintendent Lam's decisions on new hirings, when such actions have bypassed or demoted Chelsea residents. The school committee requested reassessment of the provisions of the agreement defining the formal relationship between BU and Chelsea. And individual school committee members, including the chairman, continue to express their objections to new school policies and practices in testimony before the State Oversight Panel.

The root of the problem lies in the inability of key participants to agree on the school committee's role. Despite giving away most of its powers, the school committee remains the duly constituted governing board of the school district. Accordingly, Chelsea residents still expect their elected representatives to be responsive to their concerns; the members need to do this in new ways. If incumbents do not meet public expectations, voters can vote them all out of office (the entire school committee is up for reelection every two years).

The Chelsea-BU agreement defines specific powers for the school committee, such as the right to request information as well as to reconsider BU's decisions and ultimately to terminate the agreement. All these powers are reactive or defensive. Moreover, although Superintendent Lam provides regular written progress reports to the school committee, the formal relationship between the committee and the superintendent, who is hired by the management team, remains unclear.

What the written agreement failed to provide is a proactive or positive role for the school committee in support of the reforms or in lieu of its former powers and practices. Management team efforts to provide a new role for the school committee -- as an ongoing advisory committee and liaison with the community -- have not been successful. Attempts to build trust between the two entities also have fallen short -- as when the management team invited school committee members to a retreat at BU to discuss ways to improve relations but neglected to inform them of Superintendent Lam's decision, announced the following day, to reassign the high school principal. Or when BU's promise not to dismiss any Chelsea teachers without first providing an opportunity for them to receive training was interpreted, after BU dismissed several probationary teachers, by the school committee and the teachers' union to include all teachers, when BU meant all tenured teachers.

The lack of consensus about the school committee's role and its relationships with the management team and superintendent pose a continuing threat not only to operating the school district effectively but also to the agreement itself, for a number of reasons:

1. In the absence of any constructive alternative, the school committee is in a position to serve as a rallying point for any and all opposition to the agreement. Opponents may try to undermine the credibility of the superintendent's personnel decisions and thus cause serious morale problems among school employees.

2. Continual requests by school committee members for additional information and reconsideration of decisions -- requests rooted in mistrust and justified as "need to know" -- divert the energies of the management team and Superintendent Lam away from running the school system.

3. Continued bickering within the school committee over the agreement could eventually result in a willingness on the part of a majority of school committee members to terminate relations with BU.

4. Failure to establish effective working relations between the superintendent/management team and the school committee hinders everyone's efforts to improve the schools.

Despite this contentiousness, several positive steps have been taken during the first year:

1. Although the management team and the school committee do not meet together, their meetings are sequenced to provide the latter with an opportunity to review and comment on the former's decisions.

2. Dean Greer invited school committee members to attend monthly management team meetings, and each body appointed an ex officio representative to sit with the other, to provide direct input into the proceedings and expedite information sharing.

3. The management team asked a school committee member to serve on each of the interview panels that recommends prospective administrators to the superintendent.

4. The school committee expanded the opportunity for public testimony during its own meetings, largely because the management team instituted such a practice during its meetings.

Boston University and the Chelsea Community

Creating a relationship based on trust between BU and Chelsea will be no small accomplishment. Interviews with school committee members and community leaders revealed deep resentment against BU for making Chelsea look bad in the eyes of the nation. Many of those interviewed believed that the 1988 management study had presented a worst-case scenario in order to justify signing over the management of the school system to BU and to enable BU to take credit for any early signs of improvement.

BU's outreach to the Chelsea community has occurred on both formal and informal levels. On a formal level, the Chelsea-BU agreement stipulated that BU create a community-based representative body to advise it on decisions affecting Chelsea. Until recently, the role of the Chelsea Executive Advisory Committee had remained ambiguous. However, the recently adopted bylaws should enhance interactions and enable the CEAC to provide more meaningful input.

On an informal level President Silber appointed a community liaison representative to bridge the cultural gap between BU and potentially underrepresented members of Chelsea's community, primarily Hispanic and Cambodian residents. Both these initiatives are intended to build an awareness of and support for the Chelsea-BU agreement and the related activities within the community and to identify community-based needs, as defined by Chelsea residents.

Although small in scope, many of the outreach activities that occurred during the first year have the potential to solidify relations between BU and community representatives on a personal level, primarily because the needs are being defined by Chelsea residents. The challenge for BU will be to determine how best to integrate these efforts into its school-based activities, particularly those involving the home and parents. Having the community liaison representative report directly to the president's office rather than through the management team could be problematic if activities are not carefully coordinated and channels of communication maintained.

One of the most difficult issues in establishing effective relations between BU and Chelsea has been determining how much input from community representatives in decisions affecting the agreement is appropriate and sufficient. Clearly, representatives from BU and Chelsea have different perceptions regarding this issue. In a public lecture on March 27, 1990, Dean Greer expressed his view as follows:

> There are mistaken but understandable ideas of involvement. Some people seem to want involvement mainly as proof of their rights rather than as an opportunity to contribute... If the University were to agree to all the demands for involvement from various groups this past year, just for the sake of appearances, the project would not have progressed as well as it has... It is absolutely true that involvement and participation by Chelsea groups is central to this project, but not for the sake of battling over turf.

Interviews with Chelsea community leaders indicate that they would respond to Dean Greer's view this way: "Yes, BU is listening, but do they really hear what we are saying and do they heed our advice?" Community leaders have praised BU's School of Social Work (which conducted a needs assessment before initiating any new programs in Chelsea) and commended recent deliberations over the health clinic. They cited these efforts as examples where community input was sought and used effectively. However, the prevailing perception among community leaders in Chelsea and among certain BU staff is that many BU representatives know what they want to do and are not really interested in receiving other views or concerns, particularly on educational issues.

Several steps could be taken to enhance Chelsea-BU relations:

- BU needs to make better use of the annual progress reports as a planning and strategic vehicle. One of the best ways to build public understanding of and support for the agreement is through the dissemination of periodic progress reports. Interviews with Chelsea community leaders indicate that they are not clear about what the priorities are or how BU proposes to track progress. For example, some leaders assumed that the five-year action plan contained in the 1988 study of Chelsea, would be used for this purpose.

- BU needs to provide a more focused, coordinated action plan that not only integrates the 17 goals of the management team with those of Superintendent Lam, but also

  -- sets forth short-term and long-term priorities with operational objectives;
  -- ties the goals more effectively together into an integrated package;
  -- shows how each goal relates to the others; and,
  -- given the difficulty in raising funds, uses the goals more strategically to target development efforts.

What began, in the words of BU Assistant Dean Ted Sharp, as "an arranged marriage" between two seemingly incompatible entities -- BU and Chelsea -- appears to have evolved into something quite different. The first year certainly was no honeymoon. But as the one-on-one contacts increase, BU and Chelsea appear to be settling more comfortably into what could become a meaningful relationship. This change, substantiated by interviews with Chelsea administrators and teachers, BU faculty, and members of the Chelsea oversight panel, indicates that the Chelsea-BU agreement may well have weathered an important anniversary.

APPENDIX A

APPENDIX A

List of Persons Interviewed for This Report

Members of Boston University Staff

Dr. John Silber, president of BU and founder of the Chelsea project

Peter Greer, dean of the School of Education, and chairman of the management team

Dr. Maria Brisk, professor, School of Education; senior member of the management team and director of the Shurtleff project.

Paul Clemente, associate vice president for financial affairs, and responsible for financial aspects of the Chelsea project

Dr. Jerry Fain, chairman, Department of Special Education

Dr. Carol Greenes, associate dean for research, development, and advanced academic programs, School of Education; senior member of the management team

Dr. Ronald Goldman, School of Communications, BU

Dr. Lee Indrisano, professor, School of Education, BU, and senior member of the management team

Dr. Terry Lane, School of Social Work, BU

Dr. Robert Master, School of Public Health, BU

Vincent McLellan, community liaison representative

Dr. Jeanne Paratore, professor of education and director of the Intergenerational Literacy Project in Chelsea.

Theodore Sharp, assistant dean for special programs in the School of Education and vice chairman of the management team.

Dr. Robert Sperber, codirector of the original Chelsea study

Richard Towle, vice president, BU, and responsible for all negotiations on the Chelsea project

Jon Westling, interim president of BU

APPENDIX A (continued)

List of Persons Interviewed for this Report

Members of State Government

Salvator R. Albano, Senate Chair, Joint Education Committee, Massachusetts Legislature

Jay Ash, staff member to Representative Richard Voke, House of Representatives

Lynn Beal, Director of Legislative Affairs, State Department of Education

Bill Crowley, executive assistant to the Massachusetts State Board of Education

James Crain, chairman, State Board of Education

Dr. Charles Glenn, state director of school desegregation programs; currently heading a state team that is supervising both Boston and Chelsea desegregation and fiscal plans

Representative Nicholas Paleologos, house chair, Joint Education Committee of the state assembly

Harold (Ron) Raynolds, Jr., state commissioner of Education

Nancy Richardson, education aide for Governor Dukakis

Rhoda Schneider, legal counsel, State Department of Education

Chelsea School Staff

Diana Lam, superintendent, Chelsea Public Schools

Linda Alioto-Robinson, director, Chelsea Futures Program

Mary Raimo, state and federal grants

John Andreadis, principal, Burke Elementary School

Meg Campbell, special assistant to the superintendent

Tony Di Gregorio, school master, Williams Elementary School

Sandy Doyle, director of bilingual education

APPENDIX A (continued)

List of Persons Interviewed for This Report

Paul Finkelstein, principal, Prattville Elementary School

Ann Floyd, director, Chapter I

Janet Healy, submaster, Williams Elementary School

Patricia Hines and Phyllis Hanson, middle school counselors

Denise Hurley, director of human services

Chanty Mar, Chelsea teacher

Carol Murphy, principal, Shurtleff Elementary School

Irma Napoleon, early childhood coordinator, Early Learning Center

Janis Rennie, curriculum coordinator

Kathy Satut, equity specialist

V. Soule and J. Canali, elementary school counselors

Peter Steriti, director of guidance, Chelsea High School

Ron Toleos, vice principal, Chelsea High School

Bill Towne, director of special education

Elsa Wasserman, principal, Chelsea High School

Chelsea Education Advisory Committee

Blanca Hernandez, bilingual PAC

Ed Marakovitz, Chelsea Human Service Collaborative

Carmela Oliver, special education PAC

Gwen Tyre, chairwomen, CEAC

Ed Weinstein, Chelsea Teacher's Union

APPENDIX A (continued)

List of Persons Interviewed for This Report

School Committee Members

John Brennan, mayor

Rosmarie Carlisle (replacement for Quigley)

Elizabeth McBride

Marta Rosa (replacement for Robinson)

Morris Seigal

Anthony Tiro, chairman

Lydia Walata

Chelsea Oversight Panel Members

Irwin Blumer, chairman and superintendent of Newton Public Schools

John Dunlop

Harold "Doc" Howe

Other Chelsea Community Members

Frank Kowalski, Chelsea Chamber of Commerce

Donna McNeil, PTA

Angela Meza, Chelsea Hispanic Commission

Wagner Rios, Centro Hispano

Peter Seyla Chae, Cambodian Community of Massachusetts

APPENDIX B

APPENDIX B

SOME THOUGHTS ON THE IMPLICATIONS OF THE FIRST YEAR OF THE CHELSEA PROJECT

A senior member of the research team posed some provocative impressions about the first-year of the Chelsea project. We have insufficient empirical evidence to include these thoughts in the body of our study which is intended to be primarily descriptive in nature given the early stage of the Chelsea-BU project. However, we have included them here to stimulate further consideration in future examinations of the Chelsea-BU project and other school reforms.

Implications for Other School Districts, Universities, and Communities

Several lessons can be drawn from the first year of the Chelsea-Boston University project:

First, during the initial stages of any major change, process considerations become as important as the implementation of substantive programs and should be treated accordingly.

It would be difficult to overestimate the importance of process, especially at the inception of a Chelsea-BU type of agreement, when all of the cards are thrown into the air. Thus it becomes critical to move quickly to establish new operating procedures and relationships.

Takeovers do not start out with a clean slate. They are normally grounded on a residue of bitter feelings. Yet the burden of becoming aware of the setting and establishing trust rests almost exclusively with the external entity. It needs to acknowledge and articulate differences in the perceptions and cultures between itself and the school system/community -- to be able to establish effective ground rules as well as common ground. The context makes taking steps to building that trust an immediate priority. Establishing personal contacts throughout the school system and the community becomes essential to breaking down institutional barriers.

Under such conditions, the external entity needs to be as thoughtful about the implementation process as it is about the programs and priorities it wishes to implement. This is particularly true if the initial agreement is born in conflict, when the "giver" is not unanimous about its giving over the reigns of power and when the mainstays of the district and the community -- in this case, the teachers and Hispanic leaders -- may be among the original and strongest opponents, whose support must eventually be won over to achieve success.

Conducting a preliminary management study is important, but may not be sufficient, in identifying needs, particularly if community residents feel that they were neither part of the preliminary study or perceived that the findings painted an unfair portrait of their community and school system. Thus it is worth the effort to begin any implementation phase by first defining needs collaboratively.

Any outside entity also needs to identify existing strengths within the district, and acknowledge them publicly, rather than spend the first year attempting to reinvent the wheel. Such efforts could prove cost-effective, especially when resources are limited. Even more important, a win-win strategy could minimize morale problems and potential opposition of district personnel who may feel as though they have just been colonized or made the subject of a hostile takeover.

The external party also needs to develop a strategic plan: to focus its efforts on priorities, to establish effective relationships from the outset by mutually defining priorities and responsibilities, and to inform all parties of present and future developments.

Second, in their enthusiasm for making changes, external entities may risk the danger of overselling what can be delivered -- especially in a recessionary setting which limits what the state and local governments, as well as local businesses and foundations, may be able to provide. Consequently, any external entity needs to be clear about what it will provide, as well as what the expectations and responsibilities are of the other parties. It would also be helpful to identify opportunities for shared responsibilities, such as approaching foundations or political leaders for additional funds. In addition, the stakeholders need to develop a strategy that stresses short-term accomplishments and buys the time required to implement long-term programs and to see results, as well as fallback positions when expected support is not forthcoming or in the face of unanticipated cutbacks.

Third, it is probably safe to assume that the stakeholders will not know how to act in their new capacities and will therefore need some training or technical assistance in figuring this out.

This advice is directed to all parties, including the external entity, which probably has had no experience in acting like a public body or in running a school district. Training on how to act like a school board or citizens' advisory committee can therefore be useful. Yet the suggestion, if made by one party on behalf of others, can itself become problematic. A better strategy would be to establish relationships first -- by talking about and agreeing on priorities, respective roles and expectations; or by using one body to model behavior for another (the BU management team provided for public testimony at its meetings, which has prompted the Chelsea School Committee to do the same). Training sessions might then be appropriate, once the intended party recognizes the need and requests it.

Fourth, the external entity also needs to develop a comprehensive communications strategy. Reporting relationships and responsibilities must be clear so that different units within the external entity are not working at cross purposes. In addition, the communications strategy needs to incorporate actions that reach beyond the community's organizational leaders, who may have their own vested interest in seeing the agreement fail, and speak directly to parents. Similarly, there need to be school-based linkages with parents that both complement community-school district interactions and build parental investment in the system.

Special emphasis should be placed on establishing good communications with policymakers. No one likes surprises, least of all elected officials, who do not take kindly to appearing to be uninformed in front of their constituents -- and longtime neighbors, if one is from a community like Chelsea. Key players seem to have less of a need to agree with a decision than to know what is going on and why.

Fifth, the external entity needs to establish priorities and coordinate its own initiatives internally, so that the intended recipient of such largess -- the school district -- is not overrun by kindness. Practicing such self-control may be particularly difficult for universities, which are usually confederations of schools, brought together in institutional name only. However, there are several reasons for coordinating efforts. Most important is the assurance that the help offered is based on need -- that of the school system, not the university. A second reason is to avoid duplication and waste of scarce resources -- in both university time and money.

Given the difficulty of running an entire system, it is also critical that the external entity coordinate its initiatives, be they programmatic or functional (e.g., fund-raising, public relations), school based or community based. Perhaps the best way to enhance coordination is to have all parties report ultimately to one individual or managing body, which, in effect, is authorized to speak and act on behalf of the external entity.

Finally, stakeholders need to define jointly the meaning of public input: how and when should the external entity be expected to go beyond informing other parties and actually involve them in providing meaningful input? When can the outside input be judged to be enough, especially when the external entity is accountable for delivering the results? Admittedly, providing answers to these questions is difficult and may well become situational. Yet unless such issues are articulated, the ride is bound to be bumpy, as stakeholders readjust to new roles and relationships. Some parties will be giving up authority, at least temporarily. Therefore, they need to be given something equally valued in return.

It would be inappropriate to grant community groups and school employees a veto power over key governance decisions. Nor, however, should their suggestions be ignored. What efforts to obtain and use input may cost the external entity in time in the short run should more than pay for itself in the long run. Gaining internal acceptance and support from those who are responsible, ultimately, for the outcomes -- parents, students, and teachers -- is probably the best implementation strategy of all.

A Final Word about Boston University and Chelsea

It would be premature and unfair, after one year, to evaluate the results of the Chelsea-BU agreement. BU representatives spent most of the first year coming to terms with the roles of and relationships among key players and in initiating new education policies and programs. As illustrated earlier in this report, BU and Superintendent Lam have certainly been ambitious in crafting their goals for Chelsea and relentless in their efforts to implement programs and secure outside funding to support them. Eventually, research findings should be able to shed light on the most important results -- the impact on improving student performance and opportunities.

It does seem appropriate during the initial implementation stages, however, to present a picture of what could, over time, determine the eventual success or failure of the agreement. When Boston University issued its report on how it found the Chelsea schools in 1988, in addition to highlighting the problems it shared a six-page vision of what the Chelsea schools should become by 1998, which began and ended as follows:

> As a result of Boston University's ten-year plan to revitalize the Chelsea public school system, the Chelsea schools of 1998 have become a national model for excellence in education. This has been achieved by using an innovative "family school" approach to education for learners of all ages, from pre-school to adult. Throughout the schools, the relationship between parent, teacher, and child has been strengthened by extending the learning environment into the home . . . .
>
> With Boston University's help, the Chelsea schools have taken responsibility for the educational, economic and cultural growth of its community. In turn, the city has taken responsibility for the support and expansion of the learning process. The result is a dramatic urban transformation in just a short ten-year period. Chelsea's renewed pride

and energy places it once again in the mainstream of America's tradition of opportunity through education.

If the Chelsea-BU agreement can fulfill this vision over the next nine years, the rewards should be multifold -- not only for the residents of Chelsea but also as a potential blueprint for the rest of us.

We conclude this report by raising some fundamental questions, prompted both by the agreement between Boston University and Chelsea and by activities during the first implementation year. These questions have important implications not only for Chelsea and Boston University, but also for other entities that are concerned about the future of public education:

1. Given the extent of Chelsea's needs and the recent economic downswing in Massachusetts, are normal channels (the district, city, and state) capable of addressing the problems without outside support?

2. Given the extent of the existing patronage system in Chelsea, would the district have been able and willing to reform itself from within?

3. Given the patronage as well as the lack of administrative capacity, would any outside entity have been able and willing to provide outside support without first assuming control of the system?

4. Without an infusion of local or state funds, will BU be willing and able to maintain its commitment to the agreement -- both by providing expertise and funds as well as by attracting external support?

5. Having taken over the system, will BU be able to build internal capacity and ownership among teachers and administrators in order to sustain the programs and maintain a performance-based system?

6. If BU is successful in providing the needed resources over time, once control is returned to Chelsea, will the school committee be able to attract adequate resources and operate in a way that will sustain the changes?

7. Can any family-school plan, no matter how comprehensive, succeed in sustaining educational opportunities for low-income children and their parents without also stimulating the economic vitality of the city and building a business support base for education?

8. Will the Chelsea-BU agreement continue to serve as a catalyst in organizing parents and the community and providing them with a voice on education issues? And will such efforts eventually transfer political power to local elected officials who are more representative of Chelsea's ethnic and cultural diversity? Or --

9. If the Chelsea-BU agreement is successful in stimulating needed economic development in Chelsea, will the newer immigrant populations become victims of regentrification, denied access to political and economic power? And will the

economic transformation also displace poor and minority residents of Chelsea, whose children have the most to gain by an improved education system?

10. Finally, will the ends justify the means? What are the long-term implications for a democratic society when its elected officials determine that the only way to improve education is to relinquish control? And what civics lesson does such an action teach to the intended beneficiaries, Chelsea's students?

After the first year, one can only speculate about the answers to these questions; but the questions themselves should serve as important benchmarks in judging the ultimate outcome of the Chelsea-BU agreement. Events over time should provide some compelling answers.

APPENDIX C

APPENDIX C

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A Model for Excellence in Urban Education

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APPENDIX D

APPENDIX D

The following action plan proposes a frame of reference by which to evaluate Boston University's success or failure in managing the Chelsea schools. It reflects the University's willingness to undertake a long-term commitment to revitalize the Chelsea schools, and its invitation to the Chelsea community to forge a new vision for the city itself.

During the first three years, Boston University will implement many needed reforms in the schools. These reforms include changes in administration, structure, curriculum, services and resources, and are outlined below. At the five-year benchmark, Boston University will achieve significant improvement in student performance in all areas. The most dramatic improvement will be seen in the students who entered kindergarten during the first year of the new system and who have remained for all five years. These five-year goals are also outlined below.

First Year

Within 30 days after a contract is signed between the parties, Boston University proposed a mobilization of its resources and expertise to accomplish the following actions:

1. A facilities plan will be finalized and submitted to the state for its approval. This plan will include the construction of a new high school and a new elementary school, the renovation of the existing high school, Williams school, and Shurtleff school, and the transition of the four elementary schools to a K-8 structure (see Exhibit 1 for a projected facilities schedule). It will also include a long-term plan to correct the problem of minority isolation in the schools based on a controlled choice model.

2. Three committees will be formed to make recommendations in the areas of leadership, curriculum and personnel. These committees, representing Boston University, the School Committee, administrators, teachers, parents, students and the community, will have the following responsibilities:

   a. Leadership - to develop a mission statement for the system and each school, a set of short-term and long-term goals for the system that support this mission, and a strategic plan to achieve these goals.
   b. Curriculum - to develop a long-term plan to direct curriculum toward school and program objectives.
   c. Personnel - to develop a long-term plan that will improve organizational development, personnel performance and accountability.

In addition, Boston University will take action on the following priorities.

3. The primary focus will be on kindergarten to third grade in order to revitalize the curriculum, institute new programs and services, and increase training and support for teachers.

EXHIBIT 1

Facilities Plan

September, 1988	Final plan submitted to Massachusetts Department of Education.
January, 1989	Approval of plans.
April, 1989	Completion of bid process; construction begins on new high school and new elementary school.
September, 1991	Construction of new elementary school is completed. Former Prattville and Burke schools are reutilized by city.
May, 1991	Completion of bid process for transition of former high school to a K-8 school; renovations begin in June.
September, 1992	Completion of new high school and renovations to former high school.
October, 1992	Completion of bid process for renovations to Williams and Shurtleff schools; gradual renovations begin.
September, 1993	Renovations to Williams and Shurtleff schools are completed.

4. An intensive training program will be started for all teachers and administrators, with initial emphases on grades K-3. Each individual will be trained over a three-year period.

5. Plans for a family learning center in each school will be developed, and one such program will be created by the end of the first year to focus the community's attention on the educational needs of families.

6. Family school specialists for each school will be identified and trained, and will be integral to all school operations by the beginning of year two.

7. In conjunction with local human service agencies, social workers will be hired and trained, and a community service referral network will be developed.

8. By the end of the first year, comprehensive curriculum plans for kindergarten through grade 12 will be developed in each content area. These plans will gradually be implemented over the next four years.

9. The initial phase of a five-year program to design individual service plans for all Chelsea students will be started in grades K-3.

10. A central computerized management information system will be created to accommodate the accounting, reporting, scheduling, purchasing, budgeting, and general communications needs of the system.

11. A "buddy system" will be developed to provide Chelsea students with role models that they can turn to for support and guidance, initially focusing on grades K-3. These buddies will be older residents and parents, older students, business and community leaders, religious leaders, and Boston University faculty and students.

12. Annual revenues to implement these programs will increase by $2.5 million.

13. A comprehensive computer-assisted instruction program will be designed for all schools and will gradually be implemented over the next three years, initially focusing on grades K-3.

Second Year

1. Based on the mission statement, goals, and strategic plan developed by the Leadership Committee, individual school and program objectives will be in place.

2. Based on the recommendations of the Curriculum Committee, revisions in course content and scheduling will be implemented.

3. Based on the recommendations of the Personnel Committee, new organizational structures, staffing patterns, and personnel policies will be instituted.

4. In order to revitalize the curriculum, institute new programs and services, and increase training and support for teachers in a coordinated fashion, focus will be expanded to include grades 4 through 8.

5. In the second year of the training program, services will be extended to parents as well as teachers and administrators.

6. Each school will use its family learning center to devise an appropriate community school program that develops and coordinates pre-school and after-school programs, community events, and other services.

APPENDIX D (continued)

7. Individual learning plans will be defined for each student in grades 4-8, and will be understood and agreed to by parents, teachers and students.

8. Annual revenues will increase by an additional $2 million.

9. All other programs and activities initiated in year one will be expanded in year two, with an emphasis on grades 4-8.

Third Year

1. A comprehensive testing program, responsive to the schools' new goals, curriculum, and organization, will be developed to monitor progress.

2. A comprehensive performance appraisal system, utilizing the schools' new personnel policies and management information system, will be developed to refine and reinforce goals and objectives.

3. The focus of efforts to revitalize curriculum, programs and services will be expanded to include grades 9 to 12.

4. Training for all teachers and administrators who began the program in the first year will be completed.

5. Individual service plans will be created for all students in grades 9 to 12.

6. Annual revenues will increase by an additional $1.5 million.

7. All other programs and activities begun in years one and two will be expanded, with an emphasis on grades 9 to 12.

Fifth Year

The following improvements will be seen in student and school outcomes by the end of the fifth year.

1. Average test scores for each school and the system as a whole in third grade reading, writing and math will be at the statewide average, an improvement of approximately 20%.

2. For those students who have been with the new system for all five years, average test scores will be dramatically above the statewide average.

APPENDIX D (continued)

3. Student scores on tests developed specifically for the Chelsea curriculum will have improved by 30%.

4. The dropout rate will decline from its current annual rate of 15% to well below 10%.

5. Elementary school enrollment will be 10% above current projections.

6. Average daily attendance will above 90%.

7. The number of high school graduates will increase by 10%.

8. There will be a significantly greater number of graduates going on to four-year colleges.

9. Job placements for graduates through the schools will increase dramatically.

10. Teacher absenteeism will decline by an average of 20%.

11. Average teacher salaries will be competitive with the statewide average.

APPENDIX E

APPENDIX E

Cash Gifts and Pledges for the Chelsea Project as of October 31, 1990

DONOR	CASH RECEIVED	OPEN PLEDGES	TOTAL
THE HENLEY GROUP	$200,000	$0	$200,000
PRIVATE FOUNDATION (1)	200,000	0	200,000
STEPHEN AND ROBERTA WEINER (7)	117,000	0	117,000
CHARLES HAYDEN FOUNDATION (1)	0	102,000	102,000
MILLIPORE FOUNDATION (1)	60,000	65,000	125,000
MASSPORT (6)	20,000	80,000	100,000
BANK OF BOSTON (8)	33,333	66,667	100,000
ANONYMOUS DONOR (6)	50,000	0	50,000
CHELSEA BUSINESS COMMUNITY	25,000	88,000	115,000
ALICE P. CHASE TRUST	25,000	0	25,000
ACHELIS FOUNDATION (6)	25,000	0	25,000
BODMAN FOUNDATION (6)	25,000	0	25,000
SHAWMUT CHARITABLE FOUNDATION (6)	25,000	20,000	45,000
STATE STREET CHARITABLE FUND	20,000	40,000	60,000
WARREN ALPERT (2)	0	100,000	100,000
RAYTHEON	60,000	200,000	250,000
WILLIAM C. NORRIS INSTITUTE			
METROPOLITAN CREDIT UNION	0	16,000	15,000
RUBIN, RICHARD H. M/M	10,000	0	10,000
SHEIKH, SAEED M/M	10,000	0	10,000
POLAROID FOUNDATION	10,000	0	10,000
FREY, DONALD N. DR.	10,000	0	10,000
BROADWAY NATIONAL BANK	10,000	0	10,000
SCHRAFFT CHARITABLE TRUST	10,000	0	10,000
EASTERN MINERALS INC.	10,000	15,000	25,000
XEROX FOUNDATION (3)	15,000	30,000	45,000
TRW FOUNDATION (4)	30,000	0	30,000
152 INDIVIDUAL DONORS FROM $5 TO $8,999	69,094	8,100	77,194
TOTAL	$1,059,427	$831,767	$1,891,194

(1) Computer Technology Project--Restricted Fund
(2) Dependent upon a match of 9 other $100,000 donations
(3) Intergenerational Literacy Project--Restricted Fund
(4) Math and Science Education--Restricted Fund
(5) Curriculum Development--Restricted Fund
(6) Early Childhood Education--Restricted Fund
(7) Scholarship Fund with preference for Chelsea High--Restricted Fund
(8) Innovation and Parental Involvement--Restricted Fund

APPENDIX F

APPENDIX F

Grants Funded and Pending for the Chelsea Project as of October 31, 1990

GRANTS FUNDED and PENDING	PERIOD	PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR	AMOUNT	FUNDING AGENCY
HIGH TECHNOLOGY HOME LEARNING CENTERS: COMPUTER COORDINATED EDUCATION IN THE HOME	9/1/90-8/31/91	C. GREENES	$80,700	IBM
PARENTS AS PARTNERS-INTERGEN LITERACY	10/1/90-9/30/91	J. PARATORE	$105,829	USDE/FIRST
PARENTS AS PARTNERS-INTERGEN LITERACY	9/1/89-8/31/92	J. PARATORE	91,000	USDE/FIRST
PARENTS AS PARTNERS-INTERGEN LITERACY	9/1/90-12/31/90	J. PARATORE	12,709	MASS DEPT OF ED.
PARENTS AS PARTNERS-INTERGEN LITERACY	12/20/89-12/30/90	J. PARATORE	25,000	MASS DEPT OF ED.
LITERACY TUTORS PROJECT	7/1/90-6/30/92	K. RYAN	49,987	USDE/STUD LITERACY CORPS PROG
VOLUNTEER LITERACY TUTORING: THEORY AND PRACTICE	7/1/90-8/30/91	K. RYAN	59,965	USDE/FIPSE
TOTAL GRANTS FUNDED			$425,190	
INSTITUTE FOR DRUG EDUCATION AREA SPECIALISTS (IDEAS)	10/1/90-2/29/92	G. FAIN	$184,222	USDE
PARENTS AS PARTNERS-INTERGEN LITERACY	9/1/90-8/31/93	J. PARATORE	264,819	USDE/EVEN START BU SUBCONTRACT TO CHELSEA
PARENTS AS PARTNERS-INTERGEN LITERACY	10/1/90-9/30/91	J. PARATORE	53,693	BOSTON FOUNDATION
PARENTS AS PARTNERS-INTERGEN LITERACY	1/1/91-6/30/93	J. PARATORE	78,410	MASS/DOE
INDIVIDUALIZED LEARNING PLAN	1/1/91-9/30/91	C. GREENES	140,792	COX FOUNDATION
STAGE II INDIVIDUALIZED LEARN PLAN	1/1/91-4/30/91	C. GREENES	34,821	BEST FOUNDATION
TOTAL GRANTS PENDING			$756,757	